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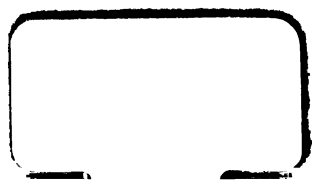
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E. J. Shuttleworth
THE *Brisbane*
April 7th
VAGABOND
PAPERS

Sketches of Melbourne Life, in Light & Shade

FIRST SERIES

George Robertson
MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, AND ADELAIDE

1877

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PREFACE.

TWELVE MONTHS back I landed in Melbourne, sick in body and mind, and broken in fortune. After the manner of new chums, my first proceeding was to spend all my store. Then I was reduced to the disagreeable alternative of raising money, or becoming, in truth, "a vagabond." In other days and climes, friends have flattered me with commendations of my capacity for "slinging ink": so, not being able to obtain a Government sinecure, I turned my thoughts towards literature. I think that the number of the *Australasian* in which my first effusion was inflicted upon the Victorian public is about the most interesting ever printed. It started a new era in my existence. Since then, with the kind assistance and patronage of the conductors of *The Argus*, I have been striking out a new line in Australian journalism, and have been investigating the social life and public institutions of Melbourne from a point of view unattainable to the majority. I have everywhere been on "the inside track," and write from that eligible vantage point.

It will be seen that I have had, much to my disgust, to work in the different characters I have assumed. I only trust my hard labours have been repaid by the amusement I have afforded the public. Some modicum of useful information respecting our charitable institutions, and particularly the lunatic asylums, may also be gathered from these revised papers. They are issued in compliance with many requests, and with the sanction of the proprietors of *The Argus*; Mr. George Robertson having boldly expressed his willingness to risk the publication.

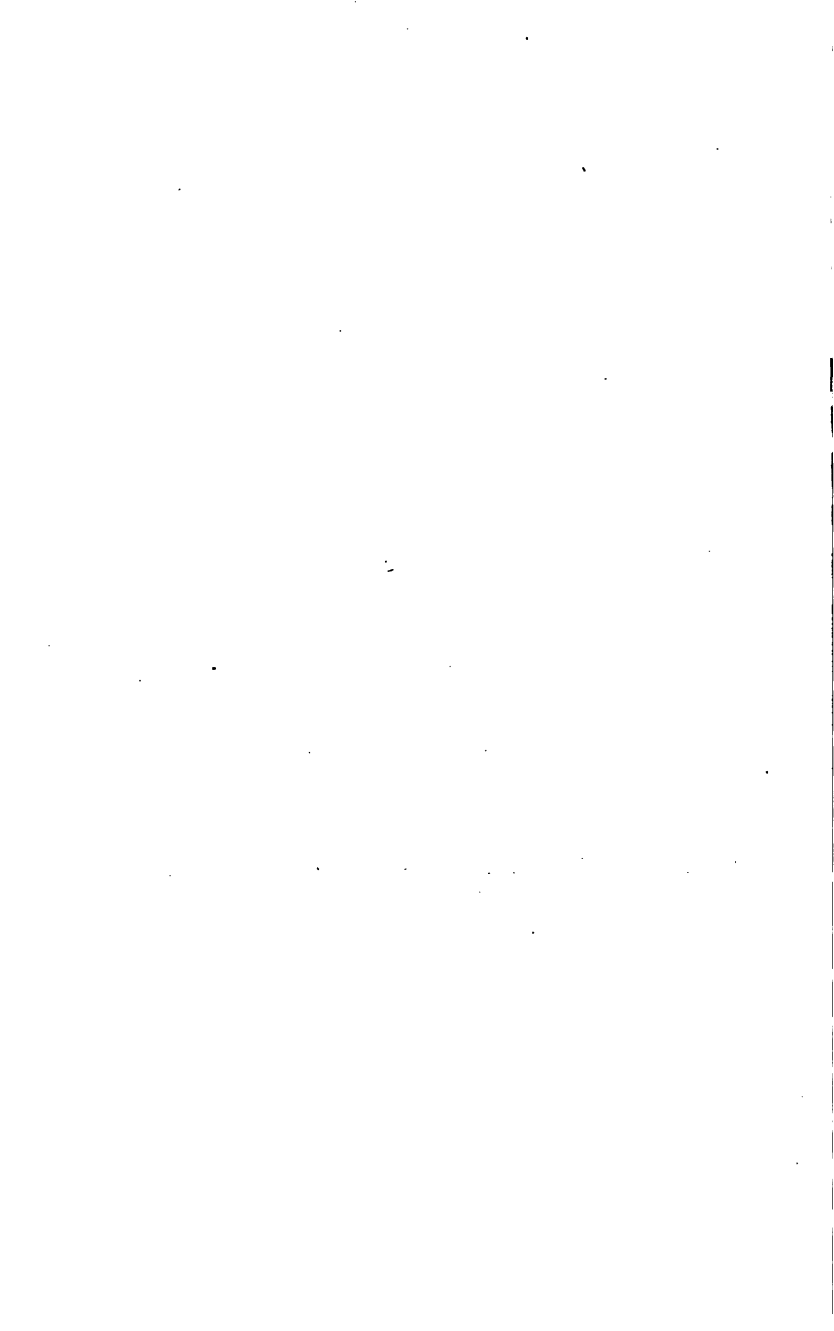
“THE VAGABOND.”

MELBOURNE, *November, 1876.*

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THE VAGABOND PAPERS.

A NIGHT IN THE MODEL LODGING-HOUSE.

Facilis descensus Averni—the road to ruin is proverbially easy. But the word ruin has many different significations. The Duke of Diddlesex a short time back was said to be ruined. After spending his time and substance in riotous living, he thought to retrieve his fortunes by plunging heavily on the turf. He attempted to break the ring, but, as usual, that institution was too much for the amateur, and the ring broke him. The Duke gracefully retired to the Continent, and lives in elegant ease on the few thousands which yearly fall to his share after payment of the interest on the mortgage on his estates. As for those creditors who are not secured, why they may go hang, the wants of a Duke cannot be curtailed to satisfy some miserable tradesmen who doubtless charged him 50 per cent. above the value of their goods. The Hon. Fisk Allan, ex-senator and banker of New York, was ruined last year, failing for 10,000,000 dollars. According to the New York press, the hon. gentleman was universally sympathized with. He still resides in his well-known mansion in Fifth Avenue, and his wife still wears those magnificent diamonds which the Grand Duke

Alexis admired so much. Griffiths, M.P., the great Welsh iron and coal speculator, has been ruined many times ; it seemed to agree with him. After his last grand *coup* in selling to a public company for £250,000 some works which made it insolvent in a year, he has however retired from business, and devotes his attention to politics and the regeneration of the working-classes. Smith, who opened that publichouse in —— street on borrowed capital, is said to be ruined. Poor fellow ! he never had a penny of his own—honestly earned—and has succeeded in getting into debt to the extent of £3,000, and some of his late customers are getting up a purse for him, in recognition of their admiration for his sportsmanlike qualities. Honest folk, however, fight a long time with misfortune before they get really to the bottom of the hill, when the *res angusta domi* no longer press on them, because they no longer have house nor home. But once really ruined, the transit to vagabondage is swift, and swifter, perhaps, in the colonies than anywhere. I know I have passed, with many intervening stages, from Menzies' Hotel to the Model Lodging-house in what seems a remarkably short time.

In a state of civilization, the outward attire has, I believe, a great deal to do with the moral character. "Julie, dear, we shall never know in Heaven the supreme satisfaction of being well dressed which we enjoy here," said a French lady to her friend ; and without placing the man entirely below his tailor, I think that any one who has been accustomed to dress well all his life, to have his morning bath, be carefully shaved, &c., when he loses these and becomes shabby, experiences a moral degradation, and feels lowered in his own eyes. I know that as I became a vagabond in appearance, I began to feel a vagabond in my nature. I had all my life been part of my tailor or my

hatter. None but a Greeley, a Gladstone, or a Vogel can afford to wear a bad hat ; and, looking at mine now, I feel what an "ordinary cuss" I must appear to the world. But after all, this state has its advantages. I have learnt a great deal of life, have conversed with many interesting specimens of humanity (from a student's point of view) since I shed my finery. Given good health, and the chance of getting something to eat every day, I don't think the vagabond, "homeless, ragged, and tanned," has such a bad time of it during the summer months. I really felt that there were sweets as well as bitters in that life. Tired and exhausted, to lie on your back, shade your face under a bush, and sleep soundly, while the glorious sun roasted your limbs, that was real enjoyment. All pleasure is but a relief from, or contrast to, pain. Without knowledge of evil we should not know good ; and so I think the vagabond who suffers in excess from hunger, thirst, and fatigue, in satisfying these, has a greater enjoyment of pure animal life than those clad in purple and fine linen, who sleep on couches of down and fare sumptuously every day.

It is a wet, dismal night. I consult a friendly policeman, who informs me that, at the Model Lodging-house in King-street, I can get a bed for sixpence. Rejoiced at the news, I wend my way thither through the pouring rain and biting wind. The building is a large one, of plain brick, three stories high. On the steps I find three decent-looking men smoking. Entering the hall, on my left I perceive a little window, where I deposit my sixpence, and the official in charge gives me a ticket marked 154, on the back of which he writes my name in chalk. Passing through glass doors, I mount the stairs, and, on the first landing, am received by a courteous warder, who takes my ticket and directs me to my bed. I find that, with the excep-

tion of the enclosed staircase, the whole floor is open, the landing being partitioned off by iron screens about six feet high, dividing the floor into two parts. Entering the left hand ward, I see, by the dim gaslight, two long rows of small iron beds ; and, passing between these, I find my way to No. 154, each bed being labelled in large characters. The beds are placed very close together, and there is no furniture in the room but these. As I look around I see, by the beds already occupied, that it is customary for the lodgers to place their clothes under their pillows for safety's sake, or because there is nowhere else to put them. I follow the custom of the place, and am soon in bed. The mattresses and pillows are straw, the sheets coarse, but apparently clean, and the blanket and counterpane warm. There is barely room to walk between the beds. Stretching out my arm, I could easily place my hand on the forehead of the man in the next bed. Indeed, I was disturbed in the night by a stroke on the cheek from the hand of my left-hand neighbour, who lashed out wildly, killing mosquitoes in his dreams. About half of the fifty beds in the ward were occupied when I entered, and, sleepless, I watch the new comers, who troop in one by one. I find the general custom is to strip to the buff. Night-shirts, of course, there are none ; and the naked figures flitting about the room, as a rule, show a lamentable lack of physique, and would serve as examples that we have sadly degenerated since the days of the mighty men of old. By the bye, were the ordinary Romans and Greeks so much stronger, handsomer, or more graceful than ourselves ? I have an idea they were not, and that the magnificent sculptured models of humanity which exist to shame us were the artists' ideals, and not to be taken as types of the ordinary Greek or Roman. It is true, they might take as models the finest specimen of physical

beauty to be found amongst their trained athletes. But we have athletes in our day in no way inferior to those of old. I believe with Byron that there are "much finer women, ripe and real," than the Venus de Medici; and when I saw the late J. C. Heenan strip to fight King, I was not alone in the opinion that he was a finer model of strength and grace than any perpetuated on marble or canvas.

Reveries! How one's thoughts do wander lying awake here with nothing to attract the attention in the glaring white walls and ceiling, the long windows, or the monotonous row of beds. By and bye, the ward is nearly filled. I see that many of the lodgers are old hands, and appear to have their regular beds, to which they make their way as to their home. There has been little talking up to this, those who have gone to bed early being evidently tired out, but now two men at the end of the room nearest me begin an argument on the policy of Sir James M'Culloch. This is interrupted by the entrance of a decently-dressed youth, whom they tell not to keep them awake to-night. "I assure you, gentlemen," says the youth as he takes off his coat, "that I went to sleep last night with my finger between my teeth, and this morning it was quite sore, but I'd do anything rather than disturb you." I wonder with what strange malady he can be afflicted that involves such a curious mode of taking rest, till by the conversation I gather that before his time he has taken to gnash and grind his teeth, awaking all his neighbours. He is a very polite, but rather verbose, young man, and promises to keep his finger between his teeth this night. "If I should 'appen to begin, you call me," said he. "I'd do anything rather than disturb you. You'll excuse me if I do, for I don't mean to. I know a man must have his rest," continued he argumentatively, "if he's

working, he must have his rest, if he's looking for work he must have his rest, and if"—and here he paused, with his shirt partly off, and considered—"well, if he's a-loafing he must have his rest." Nobody disputing this the grinder got into bed triumphantly, and emboldened by success, began a long yarn:—"When I was a-paying 16s. a week for board and lodging before I came here"—the essence of the story was the frightful amount of gnashing and grinding which he did in his sleep and the terror he caused the household. "But he didn't mean to do it, and he hoped they'd excuse him." "Oh, yes, we'll excuse you." "Go to sleep now." "Shut yer ——— mouth," saluted him at last, and he subsided to his pillow, but being a courageous youth, he suddenly sprang up in bed, and waving his naked arm, "You'll find me a man whichever way you take me," and with this defiance to the ward collapsed. And now it was nearly twelve o'clock, and a natty little figure dressed in clothes of a fashionable cut, and swinging a cane, walked down to a bed nearly opposite mine. The walk was that of a gentleman, and of one accustomed to field sports, but the new comer was evidently quite at home here, as he went straight to his bed—a sure sign that he was not a new hand. At twelve o'clock the warder came along and turned the gas low down, and retired to his own dormitory, just partitioned off by the iron screen, and being between the two wards forming the two wings of the floor. One bed next to mine was vacant; it gave me breathing room, and I felt that I should hate the man who would occupy it. There is something in presentiments. After the warder had retired, a figure came down the room. If not drunk, he had had more than "enough;" there was a difficulty in getting into bed, and when once in, he perfumed the neighbourhood with a choice

odour of rum. All these experiences were perfectly novel to me, and I could not sleep. I longed for a pipe which might purify the air around me. I presumed smoking was prohibited, although I had seen no notice to that effect, and my ticket, unlike English railway ones, did not contain any announcement. "Issued subject to the conditions printed on the company's time-bills;" the said conditions, which no one ever reads, barring travellers from recovering damages for any *lâches* of the company. At length I decided not to smoke, although the whole ward being apparently asleep I might have indulged in the weed with impunity. Analysing my motives in my mind, I came to the conclusion that I was actuated by much the same feeling which leads many an English country gentleman to spend sunny mornings in his parish church. He doesn't think it would do *him* any harm to stop away, or that he gets much good by going, but *les autres* they must go, and he will not set them a bad example, besides he is too honourable to evade a duty which he shares with the lowliest of his hinds.

Hour by hour the night passes away, the only disturbance an Irishman in the next ward fighting in his sleep, and cursing his mythical antagonist. I listen with much curiosity for any sign of the Grinder. I should have liked to have heard a specimen of his powers, but he is staunch as steel to his word; his teeth, presumedly, are crushed on his finger, for he gives no sign. There is one sound, however, which continues all night, and falls gratingly on my ear. It is the continual coughing—not, as a rule, that caused by a trifling cold or bronchitis, but the dry, hacking cough which physicians know so well. The place sounded like a consumptive hospital, and as an indication of the health of the colony was anything but

re-assuring. Towards daybreak I fall into a heavy sleep. I am awakened in the morning by a loud call of "Cab," some cabman is being aroused. Many of the inmates call each other and exchange morning greetings. I find that the man I christened "the swell" slipped away early; the Grinder also is gone. I am one of the last to arise, and consequently on going to the lavatory (there is one at each end of the building on each floor) I find it hard to discover a clean bit of towel. I manage to get a good wash at last and make my way down stairs and through a passage into the back yard, where I am told I can clean my boots. On one side of the yard I find a shed where there are brushes and blacking, and where lodgers are allowed to smoke. At the end of the yard is the laundry, and in the centre sheets are hanging out to dry. On the other side is the kitchen, which I enter, and find filled with lodgers, who are evidently old hands. Some are boiling water over the fire, others consuming the tea already made, together with scraps of food which they produce from the shelf or the lockers, of which there are a limited number, and which are allotted to *habitués* on payment of a trifling sum for the keys. These men appear to be generally labourers. I enter the building by another door, and find myself in a ward divided by wooden partitions about ten feet high into a number of little rooms. Rooms containing only one bed are charged 1s. a night. For a bed four in a room you pay 9d. a night. On the other side of the building is a large room furnished with tables and forms, which is used as a sitting and reading room by the lodgers. A few daily papers are taken in for their use, and draughts and dominoes also provided. Leaving this I pass through the glass doors, and over the ticket window see a framed copy of the rules of the Model Lodging-house Company

(Limited), which appear fairly reasonable. Smoking in any part of the building is strictly prohibited, and no intoxicating drinks are allowed to be brought on the premises. As I am perusing these rules, the superintendent, Mr. James Watkins, comes from his office, and courteously answers my questions. On the first and second floors there are 200 sixpenny beds, and on the ground floor 96 shilling and ninepenny ones. On Tuesday night there were only two beds vacant in the establishment, and during the winter months scores are nightly turned away. The staff is composed of a superintendent, matron, and three wardsmen, with laundry girls. The institution, although not started by its proprietors with any idea of great pecuniary results, is likely to pay 10 per cent. Mr. Watkins showed me a small library which he has in his office, and from which he lends books to the lodgers. But he informs me he is sadly in want of more books, and would be obliged by donations of such from the over-stocked libraries of citizens. Any gentleman who has half-a-dozen books he has read through and does not know what to do with, cannot do better than send them to the Model Lodging-house. Mr. Watkins says that fully five-eighths of the lodgers are studious men. One-fifth he states to be men who have occupied, and may again, good positions. They are ex-army officers, barristers, lawyers, and doctors—men who have either been thoroughly ruined, or are under a temporary cloud. The remainder are generally tradesmen, or good, honest working-men. Altogether, after my trial of the Model Lodging-house, I left very well pleased with the courtesy of the officials and the cleanliness of the place. One or two reforms I would hint at. There are, I think, too many beds in the wards. Smoking should be allowed in the reading-room at night; on wet, cold

nights men will not stay in an open shed in the yard, the only place where they are allowed to enjoy tobacco, but will certainly go to the nearest public-house. I think, too, more clean towels and sheets might be provided. In conclusion, I will mention one curious fact which may be of interest to the churches. I particularly watched at night to see if anyone knelt in prayer. Not a soul. In the morning only one boy knelt, and that after everyone else had left the room. Poor lad, I hope he was not ashamed of his devotions.

A DAY IN THE IMMIGRANTS' HOME.

WHAT is a home? Turning to the dictionaries I find it variously described as "a place of constant residence;" "One's own house, one's private dwelling;" "One's own country." Or I am told that the real meaning of the Anglo-Saxon Hām or Hæm is "a place where one dwells together: the dwelling or abode of our feelings and affections;" and this latter definition appears to be the one which generally we understand when we talk of our home. As Dryden says, it is

"The sacred refuge of our life,
Secur'd from all approaches but a wife."

And another poet—

"Home's not merely four square walls,
Hung with pictures, framed and gilded;
Home is where affection calls—
Where our fondest hopes are builded."

And so I think the Immigrants' Home is misnamed. Certainly, as a place of constant residence, it is not the home

desired by immigrants, or to be pointed out as a great inducement to bring people 12,000 miles across the sea to settle in Victoria. It is not their own house or private dwelling, and if people dwell together there it cannot be said to be the abode of their affections. In the words of the earliest of English poets, Robert of Gloucester,

“Homelyche and shorte clothes wseth he,”

as I walked down Swanston-street the other day, *en route* for the Immigrants' Home, with my “fondest hopes,” built not on the affections, but a stronger passion, desire for food and shelter.

Civilization has its disadvantages. In a savage state man readily builds himself a home, be it only a mud one. I am worse off than the savage. I know how bridges and railways should be built, but if set to work to make a mud hut, I am afraid I should make a poor job of it. These disadvantages extend also to the domesticated animals. Rising from the pools in the Government Domain I see hundreds of wild ducks, which, rejoicing in their freedom, make their nests in the reeds and pampas grass, and obtain an easy subsistence from the waters, increasing and multiplying after their kind. On the embankment sloping from the bridge lies a wretched cur, meanest of all his tribe, mangy, and ophthalmic. He coils up in the dust a few feet from the road, trying to sleep. I speak a few kind words to him, and he opens his bleary eyes, and rising, limps off a yard further. Poor dog, he does not appear to recognize the kindly tone of the human voice. He has heard it but to curse and abuse him. Frightened of man, and yet afraid to trust himself far from human habitations, the pariah dog of our streets, hungry and homeless, seems a strange

satire on our civilization. In a state of nature, the dog would make himself a lair, and would prey upon weaker animals, according to the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. Civilization seems to press hardly on the outcasts, both man and dog. Strange that they should have such a love of life as to cling to it amidst all their sufferings. Euthanasia, I am afraid, will never become popular amongst *les misérables*, although, if it could be introduced successfully amongst them, it would certainly solve a good many difficult problems.

Before the commencement of the late unpleasantness in the United States, if a Southern gentleman could have been shown the Viceregal palace as it now stands, he would have said, "Elegant! Yes; almost as good as our Governor's house at Columbia; and these, I reckon, are the niggers' quarters." For, planted just at his gates, the iron and wooden sheds which form the Immigrants' Home seem to a stranger to be an appanage of the Governor's establishment. I believe it was proposed a short time back to remove the home, but I suppose it is left in its present situation that it may serve as a useful warning to succeeding Governors of the vanity of human endeavours as exemplified in its inmates, and the reward of merit as shown in their own cases. But a pistol-shot from the ragged tramp sleeps the governor, arbiter of life and death. I don't know that I should like this establishment so near me if I held an exalted position. I have an idea that Naboth (a small selector of the age) was a man of disreputable and unclean appearance, and Ahab a cultured and refined gentleman could not endure such a neighbour. There are a good many Ahabs in this world, and really they have reason, for the Naboth of the period is not enticing. He is best away from the vicinity of our vineyards.

Passing through the gateway on one side there is a high fence separating the establishment from the grounds around the Government-house. On the other, the first thing which strikes the eye is a closed sentry-box. Behind this is an iron building, supplemented by a verandah. Ascending some steps towards this, I am met by an ancient porter, who, in reply to my inquiry as to the whereabouts of the office, informs me gruffly that "There aint anyone there, and won't be till two o'clock." I fling myself down on the bench under the verandah, and eye my informant. He looks as if he was going to order me off—I shall contest the point. However, he contents himself with informing me that "the clerk will be in the office at two. It's no use anyone coming 'ere as won't abide wi' rules. Folks can't do as they like 'ere." A wondrous old man is this ancient warder. Charles Dickens, I am sure, would have been delighted with him. His trousers are of many colours, but not of one seam, as the substances are as various as the shades. The neatness with which those pieces (one cannot call them patches, for who can say which is a patch?) are sewn together is wonderful. He is, altogether, a very neat-looking old man, apparently over fifty, the model of a work-house warder, his spare frame and sharp features giving him a cantankerous appearance, which must be very useful to him in his position, and which his conduct fully bears out. He returns to the room in the shed, of which I take advantage to stroll around the place. On one side of the drive leading to a house situated in a pleasant garden, and which I presume to be the superintendent's, is a row of little wooden huts, all joined together. A few flowers are about, and they look cheerful and homelike. This is a deception. These huts are the habitations of the female inmates, who are kept together, wives separated

from their husbands, the managers of this institution being wisely of John Stuart Mill's opinion regarding "hereditary paupers." Before you arrive at these there is the office, and parallel with the iron house first mentioned there are several more iron erections, one marked "Dormitory," another "Bath." The door of a third is open, and I see it crowded with men and women picking oakum. Evidently you must work for your food here. The old warder follows me, and tells me, "You'd better come and sit over there; you can't go about like this. It's agin the rule, and fellows as come 'ere must abide by rules.' So I return to my first post under the verandah, where I cannot see any of the other buildings. A sleek, well-fed cat comes and rubs herself against my legs. Strange that cats always appear to make a good living where the nobler animal, the dog, would starve. By and bye some old men walk down the path, and go out into the road. One old man brings out a plate of scraps from the house; the cat immediately deserts me for him. Two old women creep in. Next come two boys with a kite, which they have been making round the corner. They have to put this up hurriedly, and join a procession of about 30 boys and girls, which start for the schoolhouse. This, with the hospital, is situated on the other side of the St. Kilda road. Then, with a wheelbarrow, there enters a most wonderful dwarf, wanting but the hump to be a splendid Quasimodo. He rests opposite to where I sit, and eyes me steadily. I dare say he is wondering what is my history. I wonder as to his. He passes, and it is getting dull, when an old lady enters, and immediately makes things lively with the porter. She has evidently suffered with grievances all her life, and she sympathizes with herself. She relates her present grievance to the porter. "Those who come 'ere must

abide by rules" is his unvarying dictum. "You must sit down there and wait for the clerk," and so she sits by me. "Folks 'as come 'ere 'as to 'umble themselves," she remarks, to which I cheerfully assent. "They 'as to abide by rules," says the porter. "I little thought I should ever 'ave come to this, when I might 'ave gone to New Zealand and done well," says the woman. "Pity you didn't," says the porter, and retires to view the St. Kilda road. She confides to me that he is a "disagreeable old brute," and afterwards that "If I 'ad money I would never go 'ungry," a statement which I on my own part heartily endorse. The clerk comes at last, and, following him into the office, which also appears to serve as a store, as a pile of loaves of bread is stacked in one corner, I ask to be admitted to the Home. "You want to come in for a night or two? Well, come again at half-past five" is the reply.

Before returning to the Home that night, I read in *The Argus* that the weekly report of the Immigrants' Aid Society gives the number of the inmates as 460, of whom 140 are sick, 128 oakum-picking, four stonebreaking, &c. I also read that "no fresh cases of scarlet fever have appeared in the institution," which is encouraging. At half-past five punctually I am at the gate. The old porter is on the watch, sharp as a terrier, ready to pounce on all comers. "There's no one in the office; sit there," says he, "and remember them as comes 'ere 'as to abide by rules." Several men are already sitting on the bench under the verandah. Next to me is a decent-looking man, fairly clad, who has his swag with him, and looks like a station hand. On the other side is a poor, ragged, disreputable, diseased old man, who clings to a large basket affectionately. Shortly there enters a blonde-bearded, spectacled individual, who, barring his shabby-genteel clothes, would make a capital

model for "our artist," as he is generally depicted in the London illustrated papers. Others troop in; amongst them, one woman. We all wait patiently under the verandah, the porter prowling around, having a sharp word for all, and seemingly looking on every casual as his natural enemy. He knows many of the crowd, who have been there before. One man explains to him how he had got rid of his money. "That shows what plenty does. It makes a man make a fool of himself—that's plenty," says our Diogenes. To another who creeps in, "Well, you have got the cheek of the devil to come 'ere after bein' turned out this morning." "What can a man do?" says the unfortunate. "Do! why, do as you've done afore!" which, as by his appearance he's been going to the dogs, is not charitable advice. A desultory conversation is kept up, some relating their bad luck in looking for work. "There's one thing as is no use; it's no good a-looking at advertisements," says a youthful disbeliever in the power of the press. I am thinking of investigating the grounds for this extraordinary statement when the clerk arrives and we troop round to the office. Several of the regular inmates are before us, and are supplied with loaves of bread. Two or three who apply for re-admission are refused, one of them for being drunk on his last visit. The clerk is courteous, but firm, to all. My turn comes. "Your name?" "Age?" "Religion?" "Occupation?" "Ship in which you landed?" "How long since?" "You have no money?" All these questions being answered, I am told to stand on one side for a minute. Four others go through the same formula, and then a paper, with our names written thereon, is handed to one of our number, who, familiar with the place, leads the way up the road, past huts and sheds, until we arrive at a large wooden building. Entering this we pass to the end, where

there is a little room, in which sits a warder, reading by the light of a lamp, surrounded by cut hunks of bread. A large can of tea is on a stand, and a shelf above is piled with tins. The paper being given to him, he calls over the names. "Fitzgerald?" "Here." "Take some bread, and help yourself to tea." As I take my hunk, which weighs about two ounces, he tells me I can have more bread if I want it. We sit down on the forms in the large room, and wolf our meal. The bread is good—the tea will not affect our nerves. One man has a plate of meat given to him by one of the inmates who is working out, and pays a shilling a day for his board.

Our supper finished, we have time to look around. The room is bare, with the exception of the benches and forms, and some Scripture texts and religious sentiments nailed on the walls. In large letters it is set forth, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," a motto which seems to me to be singularly inapplicable in this connexion. Surely we are not to be content with this. It is the contentment of the masses in their ignorance and dirt which causes most of the disease and vice in this world. We are allowed to smoke in the room, and there is a shed outside, also, for that purpose. I light my pipe and wander around. The inmates appeared to be allowed a deal of liberty, as I walk all over the place. Lights are in some of the buildings. Peeping through the windows, I see the dining-hall of the habitual inmates who are sitting comfortably taking their supper. A brick building opposite this is a dormitory. It is furnished with neat iron beds, mattresses, and blankets. "This is not so bad, after all, I think;" but on asking Blonde Beard if we sleep there, he says, "Oh no, we have to sleep on the floor; you'll find it anything but a paradise." The trees, low build-

ings, and general outline of the place, still remind me forcibly of the negro quarters on a large plantation as seen at night. There is one exception—instead of the happy laugh of the African, everything here is very quiet. Men walk to and fro, mere shadowy outlines, with the head defined by the glow of the pipe. It is a cold, dark night. The lights of the city gleam out brilliantly. It is eight o'clock, and Saturday. Bourke-street will now be crowded, and hundreds are hasting to spend their surplus in pleasure and dissipation. Whilst here?—well, we have this consolation, that we cannot “make fools of ourselves,” for want of “plenty.” At half-past eight a bell rings; it is our signal for retiring. We cluster around the door of another wooden building. Our names are called out, and one by one we enter. Thou had'st reason, my friend; this is not a paradise! It is a rickety old shed, lighted by six barred windows. A number of mattresses are rolled up on the floor. I am lucky enough to secure one. There are about forty of these, which are soon all appropriated, and spread out on both sides, and in the centre of the floor. Inside each mattress are two rugs of the shoddiest of shoddy material. We soon prepare for rest. Some strip to the buff, and roll themselves in the rugs. Others merely take off their coats to act as pillows, and lay down with their clothes on. I hang up my coat, waistcoat, and hat, and drop on to my mattress. It is straw, of course, but my thoughts are not as to its softness—for that I care little—but as to its cleanliness. It is old, torn, and dirty. Faugh! I must rest content for one night at least. The wardman remains in the room, talking to several whom he knows. He is an Irishman, and the best type of official I have seen, as his rough humour has a greater influence with the men than the crabbedness of the porter at the gate.

There is a good deal of jesting of a Rabelaisian nature, in which the warder takes his due share. He leaves after a few minutes, enjoining us not to smoke on penalty of immediate expulsion, and retires to his room, which is partitioned off next to the door. A brisk conversation is being carried on, chiefly on the side opposite to where I lie, as my neighbours are silent. The great theme is the conduct of one of the men who applied to be admitted, and being refused, immediately went and broke the lamp at the gate in order to be locked up. The sentiment of the ward is altogether healthy, and against this act. Everyone considers the man was wrong to injure the property of an institution from which he had previously received benefits. "He was a blackguard. Shure, why didn't he go and hit the policeman on Prince's-bridge if he wanted to be locked up; there'd be something noble in that," says an Irishman. "Ah, but maybe the perliss would give him a — good hammering afore they run him in," says another. This remark impresses itself on the ward as a profound truth, which no one disputes. "Then, why didn't he go and smash one of them big windows in Bourke-street," says a third. The general opinion is that he should have smashed anything or anybody sooner than the lamp at the gate. "If he wanted to be locked up—but liberty's sweet—I wouldn't like to part with my liberty," is the expression of an individual who, by the pathos of his voice, has at some time or another felt the deprivation of that sweetness. "Who was he?" asks one. "Why, the man with the broken nose—the one Tip M'Grath hit two years ago," is the reply. "What, Tip M'Grath, the preacher?" "Yes." Then ensues a long discussion on the merits of the *soi-disant* Rev. Tip M'Grath. His fighting capacities are duly appreciated by many of the crowd. but as a "preacher" I cannot hear much of him, except

that "he had turned" that way. A man with a larger swag, and well clothed and booted, who says he has just come from Launceston, is asked his opinion of Tasmania. He "——'s the —— country to ——," swearing he has spent £20 since leaving Melbourne, and could get no work. The wardsman re-enters with two new arrivals. The beds all being taken, they have to lie wrapped in their rugs on the floor. We are now very close together, and a complaint is made of the basket belonging to the wretched old man. "What hev' yer got in that, now?" asks the wardsman. "Only a few oysters," is the reply. There is a general laugh at this, and a request to hand them around, but the old man is forced to take them outside. I remembered what particular care he had taken of this basket, but never dreamt that his whole swag consisted of a few oysters. I look around the room. The figures crouching, rather than lying, on the floor deserve the pencil of a Cruikshank properly to delineate them. In one thing most of them seem alike—they have their right hands in their bosoms. I wonder at this for a moment, until the horrible truth strikes me that they are vermin-hunting. At nine the warder brings in a tin bucket and lowers the gas. I do not know if the door is locked, but am told that a few nights back a madman was locked up with the rest of the inmates for two or three hours. He had suddenly commenced his pranks after retiring to rest, and the wardsman and night watchman being both powerless or frightened, they quietly locked the door and sent for the police. He did not do much harm, but frightened the other inmates a good deal. Conversation still goes on. Several are talking about Ballarat and Sebastopol, which they appear to know well. An Irishman, naturally, is great on the affairs of Scotland, explains all its laws, and describes Berwick-on-Tweed, Edinburgh, and Gretna

Green, "where me grandfather was married." There is a better tone in the conversation than could be expected—for a time. In this age a truthful account of the conversation and scenes in such a place as this could not be printed. It might have been possible in the reign of Elizabeth. Life in the bush and on the diggings is not conducive to decency either of speech or conduct. At last one says to the Irishman, "You'd better shut up and let us go to sleep now, or you'll be reported in *The Argus*." This causes a general laugh. I am slightly amused to think that they have read my experiences in the Model Lodging-house, and that, unwittingly, one has spoken truth.

One by one my companions all drop off to sleep. Until they do so, and even afterwards, there is one horrible sound—a continued scratching. One would imagine that this crowd would be more unhealthy than the inmates of the Model Lodging-house, but here there is none of that consumptive coughing which struck me so painfully at the King-street establishment. Mosquitoes, which in the upper parts of Melbourne are now things of the past, torment me frightfully, also other insects; but even without this annoyance I could not sleep. The smell is sickening; everything is foul—rugs, mattress, floor, and walls. Unwashed humanity—and there are some good specimens of it here—is abominable to every sense. And as I lay awake here the moral atmosphere seems heavy. May not moral contagion hang about certain buildings the same as physical? (This idea may not be new, although I think it is, but who can say what is original nowadays? We live so late that our ancestors have pirated most of our best things. This may be but chaff from the thoughts of another, which catching I handle, and turning around try to pass off as my own veritable grain.) Yes, to-night I feel that foul

thoughts and ideas hang about this place. Strange suggestions of possible crimes come into my mind. Horrible surmisings seem attached to the dirt of the walls. I am haunted by the ghosts of evil sayings and aspirations, if not of deeds. I would give anything for sleep, but it comes not. Hour after hour passes throughout the night. In the earlier part several more arrivals are ushered in, and have to lie on the bare boards. But later on everything is quiet. I hear the clocks strike, and the sound of the goods trains. Inside there is the snoring and scratching of my companions. About three o'clock it becomes very cold; the wind whistles through the many crevices in the building. Lying on the floor as we do, we are exposed to every draught. The air becomes a little purer, but the cold is very great, and the thin rugs not sufficient protection from such. Sleepless I lie. One; two; three; four; five. There seems a glimmer of light, and I rise, blistered and benumbed, from my sleepless couch.

Underneath the gas lamp I stand naked, my first care being the examination of all my clothing. I capture a curious entomological collection:—Item, two ants; item, fleas; item, what the Yankees call “chintzes;” item, strange little specimens of an insect described by some one as “man’s nearest friend,” and by connexion with which the Lucys of Charlecote have been rendered for ever famous by the immortal bard. Clothing myself, I am the first to leave the dormitory. The morning air, though cold, is clear, and after holding my head under the water tap, I find myself considerably refreshed. I walk around the place. Very few people are yet astir. The settlement is such a rambling collection of incongruous erections that it would require a guide book and plan to thoroughly describe it. Of three new brick buildings, one is a women’s ward,

separated from the men's by a high fence ; the others dining-room and dormitory of the regular inmates, who fare much better than the "casuals," of which I am one. To become an inmate one has, I believe, to obtain a recommendation from a subscriber, and satisfy the committee of disability or inability to obtain work. The inmates are mostly old men. They are engaged in picking oakum, breaking stones, &c., but I do not think their labour is very arduous. Many of them appear to have been here many years. I interview a good many of them, but cannot discover that there is any regular system of selection. It appears all a fluke as to whether a man gets in or not, and once in, if he behaves himself, he is likely to stop. The casuals are only admitted for a night's lodging and a meal of bread and tea, for which they have to pay by picking oakum or breaking stones for an hour in the morning. With the exception of the clerk, all the officials I have seen seem to be inmates. They wear no uniform, but walk around in shabby garments, and are generally to be distinguished by carrying a stick. They are mostly old men, and seem to me very unfitted for their positions, to which they are I suppose appointed from motives of economy, receiving perhaps some little extra luxuries or privileges. The good order prevailing seems to me to reflect greater credit on the inmates than on the system of management. At six o'clock the bell rings, and the inmates of the casual ward are told to turn out. Two men are selected to go to the kitchen to fetch the tea. I follow them and get a warm in front of the large boiler fires. Breakfast is served out in the same manner as supper. Afterwards, certain "casuals" are selected by name to clean and sweep out the different wards, including those of the regular inmates, who—aristocrats of the place—do not wait upon themselves. Then we break up into

groups, smoke and talk. The children, I see, are sent off to the Sunday School. Later on some religious service is held in the dining-hall, but it is not very well attended. I am having a long and interesting conversation with an old bushman. At twelve we have dinner—a great feed in honour of Sunday, soup, meat, and plum “duff.” Again in the afternoon there is church, but before this I have slipped out of a gate into the cow paddock, over the rails on the other side, and into the Domain. I could not endure another night in the dormitory, and am informed that no one is allowed to leave on Sunday. If the committee of the Immigrants’ Aid Society think I wished to shirk the oakum-picking or stone-breaking, it is a mistake. I am willing to return and give my share of work, or its equivalent—not that I consider I shall be a success in either line of business, but I do not wish to evade any obligation. Simply, I was craving for a bath and change of raiment, which, happily, I was soon able to obtain. However, in default of labour, I will give a little advice in exchange for my accommodation. As soon as practicable, I think the present site of the “Home” should be changed, or new buildings erected in place of the tumble-down sheds of which it is now principally composed. Warders of a superior class should be appointed, and supplied with uniform. The attendants, at present, appear to be all “inmates;” they are of the same class as those they have to govern—all paupers, in fact. Consequently, they are little respected, and, as is natural, assume a more aggravating manner to those over whom they exercise a little brief authority, but whom they are really afraid of. It is absurd to think that the officials of the place should be powerless to restrain the pranks of a madman (as before related), but should be compelled to call in the aid of the police. Under the present system, a few desperate or

drunken men might cause great disturbance or damage to property. Give your officers a salary, and they will respect themselves and maintain their position ; or if you must, from motives of economy, keep on the present old men, at least give them a uniform, and make them look decent. Every student of human nature knows that outward and visible signs of authority have a wonderful effect in controlling the masses. Do give better accommodation to the "casuals." There does not appear to me any sufficient reason why a new-comer, unable to obtain work, and seeking a night's lodging, should be worse treated than the "inmates," many of whom struck me as being decidedly of the genus loafer. Certainly, every "casual" should pass an inspection, and, if not cleanly, should be forced to go through the ordeal of a hot bath. This should be enforced, in justice not only to his companions in the ward, but as a sanitary arrangement affecting the whole establishment. Lastly, gentlemen of the committee, when you put the house in order, change the name. Call it what it properly is, a refuge, for certainly any place more unhomelike it would be impossible to imagine.

A MORNING AT THE HOSPITAL.

I AM only an out-patient at the Melbourne Hospital. Inside the walls I believe that everything is lovely, the arrangements perfect, the patients well cared for, the nurses patterns of Florence Nightingale (may her name for ever be honoured in the land), and the doctors, practising together in brotherly unity, totally devoid of professional jealousy, strive with all the learning of science and skill of special training to combat our

enemies disease and death. However, I am glad that I am only an out-patient.

I, a few months back, on a Tuesday afternoon, first made my way to the hospital. A friendly policeman directed me to the out-patients' ward, situated at the back of the establishment in Little Lonsdale-street. However, I made a mistake, and walked into the courtyard through the open gates, and into the casualty ward. Here "a case" was waiting, and there appeared to be a gathering of surgeons, as for a consultation. To one I applied as to where or how I could obtain needful advice and medicine as an out-patient. He was a right pleasant gentleman, and I hope he has a good practice. Taking out his watch (and, perhaps, if he reads these lines he may remember the incident), he said, "Well, you're rather late to-day, I think, but if you'll go through the other room and ask the clerk, he'll tell you all about it and put you right," and he kindly showed me the road. But my courteous informer was not well up in the ways that are tortuous before one can obtain relief as an out-patient. There were two clerks or attendants at the table, one decidedly Irish, the other with a leaning that way. "You want some medicine, do you? You're too late to-day; you must come again on Friday," was the reply, so I went on my road. (How is it that so many of the officials in public institutions in Melbourne are Hibernians? There appear to be as many of that race office-holders here as in New York during the *régime* of the Tammany Ring.) On the Friday I presented myself again. "Where's your ticket?" Now no one had said anything to me before about a ticket, and I had thought that this was a free hospital. "You must be recommended by a subscriber." "Sir," said I, "being a stranger here I know no subscribers; what am I to do?" "Oh, shure

any of the big hotels or shops will give you a card," was the reply ; if you make haste you can pass before the committee to-day." So behold there I was, a vagabond indeed, walking up Elizabeth-street soliciting a ticket for the hospital. At many establishments at which I shamefacedly put the question, "Do you subscribe to the hospital, sir?" I was, although unsuccessful, politely answered. At last I struck the establishment of a certain merchant. His clerk, a timid little gentleman, said, "Yes, we have cards for the hospital. You had better wait till Mr. — comes in." So I sat on a barrel in the warehouse, and waited half an hour. The merchant at last made his appearance—a man of keen, self-satisfied manner. I made known my wants, and he seemed dubious. "I don't know you, you know. You should ask one who is acquainted with you." I explained that I was a stranger, which seemed to be a very suspicious fact in Mr. —'s eyes. He still hesitated, rubbing his hands like a Pecksniff. I had met this sort of man before, and having humiliated myself to ask him such a trifling favour, did not dream that he would refuse, but thought that he was only self-increasing his own importance by dallying with me. "Bring me a letter from some one I know," said he, evidently with that keen relish of the difference in our positions which is as the salt of life to some men. "How can I tell who you know?" I replied impatiently. "Well, my dear sir," said he, rubbing his hands, "I am sorry for you, but I don't see how I can do it. We have so many of our own poor, and I don't know you." "I suppose if I fell down ill in the street, I should be taken to the hospital?" I asked. "Well, I suppose so." "Did you ever read the Bible?" was my next question. "I hope, sir, that I frame my conduct in this life by its precepts," said Mr. —, who evidently liked

this conversation, his own position appearing every minute so superior to mine. "Well, then, sir," said I, "would it not be economy to have me supplied with medicine before I become so ill as to become an encumbrance inside the hospital? And, again, did you ever read that the Samaritan wanted a letter of introduction from a certain man whom he succoured? Fancy the Samaritan refusing a hospital ticket to a sick man." "You're a d——d impudent fellow," said he; "get out of my place." And I left. It was rather hard on a poor vagabond to be tramping up and down Melbourne seeking for a ticket which would open for him the door of advice and medicine. At last I found a good shopkeeper who said he would give me a ticket, but he had none; if I would get one from the hospital he would sign it. It was too late to think of returning to the hospital that day, but early the next morning I was there, and asked the other clerk for a ticket to get signed. "We have'nt any," said he, "a letter will do, it's only a form." It was a form which had cost me a good deal of tramping about. However, I got the letter and took it to the hospital. Here I saw the first clerk. "I told you to come with this yesterday; you must come on Tuesday now." I told him that I wanted some medicine badly. "Well, you may go and see the surgeon in there," said he, and I made my way to the casualty-room. Here several minor cases were being attended to by a young surgeon and a dresser. He was one of the house-surgeons I suppose, and was very pale and jaded looking—through much study and burning of the midnight oil, I presume, or else through vigils of another sort. Do not suppose that I would for one moment impute any dissipation to a medical man—far from it—but these fighters with Death have always been gay livers, and hospital surgeons, I think, especially so. Do I not

remember me, how, in my early youth, in the days when Plancus was consul, I have, as guest of the surgeons in a famous London Hospital, held vigil and wassail all through the summer's night, until, the nectar being done, the jar of *tinct. card.* has been brought from the dispensary, which, mixed with water, made a very good tipple. (This is another arrow for the quiver of Dr. M'Carthy and the Good Templars.) Judging by the conduct of the medical students at a recent ceremony, the profession here is certainly not more staid than in England. "This is the last one, sir," said the dresser. "What's your name? Age? What's the matter with you?" I tell him. "Come on Tuesday," and banging together the book in which he has been registering my answers he runs across the courtyard, eager, no doubt, to get away to the Yarra for a pull, or anywhere away from the hospital. I don't blame him. Hospital surgeons are a hard-worked class—except in extreme cases they have little sympathy for suffering; they are not actually unfeeling, but are hardened. Kingsley's favourite character, Tom Thurnall, well described the class of which he was such a good specimen, when he said of himself—"I'm hard, hard as nails, sir."

I began to think that I should never obtain any benefits from the Melbourne Hospital, but on my fourth visit—one week from my first application—I was more successful. Punctually at eleven I was there, and was told to take my seat inside one of five pens into which the waiting-room is divided. These pens are provided with forms arranged so that the occupants can pass from one to the other without any obstacle. The room is not too large for its requirements. Its brick walls, innocent of plaster, are painted a sickly yellow colour. The entrance is screened by a wooden partition, which inside serves to bear a

row of shelves on which the prescription books of the patients are kept. Under these is the table where the two attendants sit. Opposite there are two wooden windows in the wall, labelled, "Physicians'" and "Surgeons' Prescriptions," and a notice, "Out-patients must provide themselves with a bottle for medicine, and when they come again must bring the same bottle, and any medicine they may have left." At one end of the ward are two consulting-rooms; at the other a waiting-room leading to the casualty ward, and another consulting-room. The floor is of concrete, of a beautiful dirt colour. I wait in the pen for some time until the clerk comes and calls us, some forty, into a pen at the other end of the room. We file into it. A number of women have just finished going into one of the consulting-rooms. A little bell rings about every two seconds, and the men file in and out. My turn comes, and I give my letter of introduction to a gentleman sitting at a table. "What's the matter with you?" I reply. He scrawls some hieroglyphics on the turned-up corner, rings the bell, and I go out and follow my predecessors, who are passing in and out of the second consulting-room. Inside this is an old gentleman, who asks me, "Have you ever been here before?" "No." "You are without means of obtaining medical assistance?" "Yes." He makes another obscure mark on my paper, and I find I have "passed the committee." All the patients are now crowding round the table, where the clerks are registering their names and giving them tickets and prescription books. After much crushing and struggling I get to the front, my paper is taken, and a book and card given me, the latter conveying the information that my medical attendant is "Dr. ——. You are to attend him every Wednesday and Saturday at eleven o'clock. If you twice neglect to attend without his leave, you will be

discharged. This card must always be brought with you, and is to be kept clean." The book contains my name, and the same number as the card. Then I follow my leaders into the first pen, the one parallel with us and opposite the door of the consulting-room, bearing the name of our doctor, being filled with women. We wait and wait, and I have ample leisure to examine my companions. They certainly none of them look as if they could pay for medical attendance. There is a mixture of nationalities—English, Irish, Scotch, and colonial; a heathen Chinee, a German, a negro, and a Hindoo from Madras, who is the most striking-looking man of the crowd, his handsome dark features and grizzled hair and moustache wanting only a turban to make him a worthy-looking rajah. He is certainly as good-looking as that English country squire the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh. He spoke remarkably pure English, and told me he had first come to this country as servant to a gentleman, and had married and settled here. There is a little Jew boy who is forward and disgusting in his conversation, a Yorkshire farmer's son who has fallen on evil days, and several station hands who have come to Melbourne for advice after spending pounds, as two or three informed me, with advertising doctors. There is a shabby genteel young man with an umbrella, whose whole manner implies a perpetual apology for having been born. But the majority appear to be working-men of the poorer class. However, I am surprised to see, waiting for another doctor than mine, one of my fellow passengers by the ———. Times seemed to have changed somewhat with him. On board he was the butterfly of the saloon, gorgeous in travelling suits of many colours, and wearing much jewellery. The latter appears to have vanished, and he is decidedly shabby. It appears to be often

thus with "new chums." The significant announcement advertised all over the city, "Emigrants' luggage bought," seems to imply that a proportion are regularly obliged to sell their luggage. The other day I made a slight purchase from a good-natured gentleman who keeps two of these establishments. He sold me what I wanted at a very cheap rate. I said something about the Customs duty being so heavy here. "Oh, I don't pay duty on any of my goods, I buy them from new chums who get hard up. I buy hundreds of pounds worth in a year." A strange mixture, indeed, you meet on board ship—the Adonis of a month back is the pauper of to-day. Actors and merchants, artists and horseriders, tourists and *demi-monde*, clergymen and card sharpers, governors and soldiers—these all travel together for so many weeks or months, and the result is striking. You form passionate friendships on board, part with Fanny at Sandridge with many soft pressings of the hand and promises never to forget. You carry Tom, and Harry, and Dick off to dinner at Menzies', swearing that they are the best fellows in the world. If you had met Fanny in ordinary society ashore you would have thought her just "pretty good form, you know," and Tom, Harry, and Dick you might have considered "cads who put on a deal too much side." I really think that any young man of good manners and fair income, who finds himself of no particular social repute in his Nazareth, cannot spend his time better than in continuous travel along the great ocean routes. If he is a good sailor and amateur musician or actor, so much the better. After the first year or so he will be quite *au fait* in the customs of steamboats and will be able to make himself generally useful, besides rendering to the ladies those *petits soins* so dear to the female heart, and always more acceptable

at sea. Wherever he goes he will find some one of good standing who has been his fellow-traveller, and who, if he plays his cards well, will introduce him into the best society. Perhaps he may one day travel with a governor. He will make himself agreeable as usual, will be asked to Government House, and thus stamped with the hall-mark of colonial society will generally have a good time of it, and may marry a heiress. Travelling is so cheap now-a-days that any man of ordinary income may do this.

To return to the hospital. The women in the out-patients' ward are much better dressed than the men. There is, of course, a great number with babies; but there is also a Dame Quickly, who wears much jewellery, and is slightly inebriated. She is in charge of a young girl, who, poor thing, blushes at her situation. She is but young in her present course of life, or she would not blush. But there are many younger than her, the reason for whose presence here is very evident. Some are nearly children. Hospital doctors know more than the police on many social evils, and I imagine that generally their experience would be favourable to the passing of a Contagious Diseases Act—it would greatly lessen their labours. We wait a long time for the arrival of our doctor. He is often very late in arriving; seldom punctual. At last he comes, and the women commence passing into his room. Occasionally we hear loud screams from the casualty ward, where limbs are being set or wounds dressed. It is distressing to see little children hobbling along on crutches, or being borne in their parents' arms, towards this ward. The dread depicted on their youthful faces of the pain they know, by experience, will be necessarily inflicted on them is touching in the extreme. The women take much longer than the men in getting through; but, when we once begin, our

progress is rapid. Certainly, the average time given to each male is not more than a minute, and one morning Dr. —— got rid of twenty-six patients in less than ten minutes. This does not allow time for any thorough diagnosis to be made of a patient's case. The treatment appears to be rough and ready. Gallons of different medicines, as prescribed in the authorities, are kept ready made up in the dispensary. What cures one will cure another, seems to be the rule, and little allowance appears to be made for different constitutions. There is not time to examine into all that. Perhaps this is the correct plan, after all ; and when our bland family physician calls daily, and inquires how the last medicine suited us, and explores, as it were, our whole system from head to foot, he is only following out a course which he knows will soothe us, and impress us with his wondrous knowledge. The great attention which our family doctor gives to our regimen is nearly dispensed with here. "Don't drink," is the order given in many cases. A hospital doctor knows that the poor must live how they can, and that a strict regimen—which is his great ally with his rich patients—is impossible with the poor. My case did not take fifty seconds of the doctor's time, the prescription was written out, and I took it to the window of the dispensary. "I have no bottle : can I pay for one?" I asked. "You'll get one outside ;" and, at the door, I accordingly found an old Irish-woman, who makes an honest and lucrative living by begging old bottles, washing same, and retailing them here. I don't know what is the value of a brandy bottle under the present system of protection. The old lady said sixpence : I thought three-pence a fair price ; and we compounded for fourpence. It was by that time after two o'clock ; and, getting my medicine, I was glad to finish my morning at the hospital.

THREE DAYS IN THE BENEVOLENT ASYLUM.

THE other Saturday was one of the finest days of the expiring season—a regular Indian summer's day—one on which to take a drive to Heidelberg, or have a walk on the pier at Sandridge or the Esplanade at St. Kilda. But, alas! like many a good man before me, in spite of all the attractions of the weather, on this day I had to go to the Benevolent Asylum. A Hotham cab (the other passengers in which looked askance at my vagabond attire) soon conveyed me thither. The outside of this institution is well known to the inhabitants of Melbourne; one of our finest public buildings, it has perhaps the finest situation, with a grand view of the surrounding country on all sides. The gardens around it are pleasant with shrubs and flowers; sparrows—immigrants who have thrived and multiplied apace—hop and twitter about the walks, keeping a careful eye, however, on their natural enemies the cats, which are in force here. Inmates walk about or sit in the sun. From an outside point of view it seems a true asylum and home; indeed, the prevailing present opinion is that it is rather too much so.

To obtain admission into the Benevolent Asylum it is first necessary to get a recommendation from a subscriber or life governor, one who has given £20. He fills up a form recommending you for admission to the committee of management. This form contains blanks to be filled up by your sponsor in answer to questions as to age, occupation, infirmity, family, &c., and two very important ones—"Has the applicant any relatives or particular friends in the country; if so, what is the relationship, and what are their names, employments, and places of

abode?" and—"Has the applicant any means of subsistence, and to what amount?" It is stated that "without satisfactory answers to these queries no application will be received," and your introducer has also to vouch for you as follows :—"Having *minutely inquired into the circumstances* of the bearer, and satisfied myself that he is a fit object for reception into the asylum, I beg to recommend him for admission." Armed with this you march up to the asylum at three o'clock on Thursday, and are brought before the committee. If you have any influence perhaps some member thereof will be friendly, and after a formal inspection by the doctor you will receive an order to enter at a certain date. You may undergo a searching examination by the committee, and be remanded for a time, or there may not be room in the institution, but if you are well recommended, and the answers to the queries are judiciously worded, there is little chance of the committee, as things are at present managed, picking any hole in the application, and sooner or later you will become an inmate. I myself had little difficulty in so doing. When you have obtained the order of admission, on presenting yourself at the asylum you will again be taken before the doctor, who, according to your age and infirmity, will classify and appoint you to the proper ward. It may be that you will be requested to then make your will, although this is sometimes deferred for a day or two. A printed form is filled up with your name, by which you "devise and bequeath all the real and personal property, &c., &c., to which I shall be entitled at the time of my death unto James M'Cutcheon, the superintendent and secretary of the said Benevolent Asylum, his heirs, &c., upon trust to sell and dispose of the same in such way as he shall think best; and to pay the proceeds thereof to the treasurer for the time being of the said Benevolent

Asylum. And I appoint the said James M'Cutcheon executor of this my will." There is another form for those who are unable to write. You are also requested to make an assignment of all your real and personal property of which you "are possessed, or may hereafter become entitled," to J. T. Harcourt, the treasurer of the asylum, whom you appoint your true and lawful attorney to vest your property in the said asylum. This assignment also contains the following clause :—"In the event of my ceasing to become an inmate of the said asylum prior to my decease, I hereby authorize the said asylum to deduct from my real and personal property the sum of £25 per annum for my clothing and maintenance during the period I may have been an inmate." In the wording of these documents I should imagine it would be impossible to find a flaw, but as to whether they will stand the legal test of voluntary execution without compulsion I cannot say. If you refuse to sign these documents you are turned out of the asylum. The assignment, certainly, is "in consideration" of being admitted as an inmate, but I think the validity of the will is doubtful. One thing is certain, however—that Messrs. Harcourt and M'Cutcheon have about the largest business as executors and trustees in the world, and in course of time they will rival the fictitious John Doe and Richard Roe of the old English formula. It has been said that people may easily by a fresh will revoke the bequest to the asylum, but as a matter of fact I should fancy they rarely do so, and the committee have under such wills received various small sums due to inmates who have died. The great haul of £2,000, the property of Nicholson, about which so much disturbance has recently been made, they will, I understand, have to fight for, or compound for payment of a trifling sum.

Having passed the doctor and executed the necessary docu-

ments, you are committed to the guidance of a nurse, who introduces you to your ward and bed. The young person who took charge of me was a fresh, pleasing-looking girl, with her hair worn in the fashion of an English dairymaid. She was a good, kind girl. Having got it into her head that I was blind, she seized me by the arm and carefully led me up and down steps, instructing me how to walk. I was rather staggered at this proceeding ; but as I never feel any repugnance to being linked with a pretty girl, I did not protest. The asylum originally fronted the south, with a cross wing at each end, and the offices in the rear. But, like many institutions and politicians, it has now changed its face, and the addition of two new wings at the eastern end makes that the front, the place now being that of a peculiar-shaped capital T. All the wings are three stories high, access to which is had by many staircases, which divide each ward. As, however, the female inmates were on the first and second stories of the ward to which I was assigned, I had to enter by a staircase at the southern end ; and, after getting to the top floor, walk the whole length of the front till I reached No. 1 ward on the north-eastern side. My guide was very attentive to me during this long journey ; and, arrived at our destination, she introduced me to the wardsman as the "new lodger." He showed me the only vacant bed ; and, as I examined it, the girl, looking at me, said, "Ain't you blind?" "Not a bit," said I. "Lor', now ! Just to think how I've been going on ! I thought they said as how you was blind." "Never mind, my dear," I said, "I like it." I examined the room. It is long and lofty, lighted by many windows, and well ventilated. At one end is the wardsman's room, on one side of which are the lavatories, and on the other a small room containing only two beds. The ward itself contains thirty iron

bedsteads, each provided with horsehair mattress, clean sheets, and (to my great joy) a clean towel at the head of each. There is ample space between the beds, and the room is broad enough to allow tables to be placed down the centre, if necessary. At the head of each bed is hung a card, stating the occupant's age and complaint (if any), and the doctor who attends him. There is also a dietary scale. The majority, I see, have "No. 3 diet," and take their meals in the dining hall. Frames containing the bye-laws, and a regulation as to religious instruction, are hung on the walls. The committee point out that, whilst the asylum purposes to give facilities for religious instruction and consolation to the inmates who are at liberty to receive such from the minister of the congregation or denomination to which they belong, at such times as the committee shall appoint, still no services can be held without application to them; and no religious instruction is allowed to be given by visitors in the wards or grounds, unless by permission of the committee. I suppose this is necessary, otherwise there would be so many good people vexing the souls of the infirm by their conflicting doctrines in season and out of season. The bye-laws contain regulations for the conduct of the attendants and inmates. The day-nurses have long hours, being on duty from six o'clock in the morning till nine at night. The night-nurses are only on duty the remaining portion of the 24 hours. The regulations for the proper care of the wards and patients are thorough and explicit. The inmates have to rise at 6 o'clock in the morning during summer and 7 o'clock in winter. They must make their own beds in a proper manner, and on leaving the wards must not return to the same until 7 o'clock in the evening without permission of one of the resident officers. The lights in the wards are ordered to be put out at 8 o'clock p.m. Breakfast at

8, dinner at 1, and supper at 5.30 are served in the dining-hall. All inmates considered capable of work are required to do so, commencing their employment at 9 o'clock a.m., and continuing till noon ; to resume at 2, and leave off at 4 o'clock. These hours are certainly light enough. I see that, true to my vagabond tendencies, I have already contrived to break one of the most important rules—"Any inmate introducing or having in his possession victuals, drink, or tobacco, not furnished by the institution, shall be forthwith reported to the committee." Now, I have in my pocket several plugs of very good tobacco, which I hope to enjoy in defiance of the rule aforesaid. It is forbidden to enter any ward but your own, or to play cards or dice, smoke in the house, or be guilty of improper behaviour, &c. Any inmate is required to hand over any money or other property in his or her control—another rule which I have broken. After perusing these rules and calculating how I could break some without incurring the wrath of Mr. M'Cutcheon, I made my way down stairs, transgressing again by making excursions along the different wings and examining the wards. They are all much alike, with the exception that the rooms in the new wings at the north and south-eastern corner are higher and perhaps better ventilated. The centre wing of the old building is divided into small rooms, each containing a few beds. Some have cupboards in the wall for the inmate's clothes. A portrait is hung at the head of one or two beds ; and there is an occasional scroll of religious texts. I wandered about mostly unheeded, as at this time of the afternoon the inmates are all working or walking in the grounds. Returning towards the south wing, I find myself in the hospital wards. These are mostly occupied by very old and infirm men, sufferers from chronic rheumatism or paralysis, or that incurable complaint,

"old age and debility." There are many in the asylum in the last stage of all "second childishness and mere oblivion, *sans* eyes, *sans* taste, *sans* everything" but a vegetable desire to live. There are fires and easy chairs in these wards for those who can sit up, and they look clean and comfortable. I will give hereafter the opinions of the inmates as to their treatment.

At last I made my way into the open air, and skirting the buildings, find myself at the dining-hall. It is now four o'clock, and about two hundred inmates are assembled there waiting for the "muster." There are those who have been out on leave, and who have to report their return at this hour. In a few minutes the superintendent appears. Mr. M'Cutcheon is on the right side of fifty, a young man for his years, tall and stout, with a fair flowing beard, a pleasant face and good-humoured eye, but with the look of a man who would "stand no nonsense." He brings with him a book containing the list of those who have been out, and calls over the names, to which the owners respond, showing themselves at the same time. One man does not answer, and the result we shall see hereafter. The men then troop into the yard and mingle with the rest. Saturday and Sunday, it appears, are the two days in the week on which leave of absence is granted, between nine in the morning and four in the afternoon, and this privilege is liberally taken advantage of, there being an average of more than two hundred absent on those two days. The others, too infirm to go out, or who have no friends, and find their only sources of interest in the asylum grounds, still welcome back the holiday-makers, and manifest a languid curiosity as to where they have been and how passed the time. This was my first introduction to the inmates in general. The first glance would divide them into two classes. Old men crippled by paralysis or rheumatism,

and younger and hardier men who are blind. There seems hardly a man in the asylum who does not walk by the aid of one stick, and the majority seem to require two. Nearly all are clad in white moleskin trousers, which are supplied by the institution.

I am soon "spotted" as a new chum, and many are the looks cast and inquiries made about me. Taking a seat in the garden, by the side of a strong-looking man with a green shade over his eyes, I light my pipe and look as if I was used to this sort of thing. Says my companion shortly, "Yer'll not be here long?" "Only come in to-day," I replied. "And what hev yer had the matter with yer?" I can truthfully reply that I have suffered from rheumatism. "Hev yer been in the hospital?" Again I do not violate the truth when I say that I have been in there, though not perhaps in the sense which my questioner means. "And did they give yer any butter with yer bread?" Jesuitically I answer that I had none there, and ask if there is any butter allowed here. "Sorrow a bit, there's nothing but dry bread; it's a miserable place entirely for a man to be in," is the answer. I learn that this man has been in the asylum eight years suffering from ophthalmia, and with no chance of getting better. With him and some others who join us I sit conversing until it is near the supper time, when the men flock round the doors of the men's dining-hall, which is a separate building (the women dine in the ground floor of their ward). Between one of the doors and the kitchen there is a verandah in which a few privileged inmates congregated; and there is a little joking with the young and good-looking servant girls who pass to and fro with the provisions. At half-past five the bell rings, the four doors of the hall are opened, and we all file in. I am shown to a place about the centre of the hall, which is large and

vaulted, and built in two wings in the shape of a T. About three hundred are present. Each man has his place according to his ward, and they all take their seats quietly and without confusion. A pannikin of tea and a slice of bread are before each man, and the maids who wait on us walk up and down with trays of bread, supplying those who want more. Many men, presumedly those who have been out and may have feasted with their friends, have little appetite ; others will eat two slices of bread, and some three. The old men all break up their bread into the tins, and eat the "sop" with a spoon. The bread is good, the tea hardly so good as that supplied at the Immigrants' Home. However, I ate my meal humbly, and with an appetite sharpened by a purposed fast. During supper the superintendent walks up and down the centre of the hall, seeing that every one is supplied, and that order is kept. The meal is far from a sumptuous one, and not equal to what I expected, but at all events you can have enough, and have no need to go to bed hungry. Such as there is, it is wholesome, and the servants are attentive. In about ten minutes after we all get settled down and served, the bell rings again, the superintendent and servants leave the room, and many of the inmates, who have not overcome their early habit of food-bolting, follow. The rest finish their meal quietly, and then march out.

It is a beautiful starlight night, the moon shines on the waters of the marsh, and the lights of Melbourne are a pleasant prospect. Very many of the old men go off to bed at once, a few walk round the grounds, or sit on the benches under the walls and smoke and talk. I join a group, and offer little courtesies in the shape of tobacco and lights. One man is talking very loudly and excitedly, and as he moves under the lights of a

window I examine him. He is a stout man, with a head phrenologically well developed, a quantity of grey hair, and a grey beard. He must have been a Nazarene for many years, and have a deadly hatred to knives and scissors, as his finger nails would do credit to a Chinese ; they are long as a tiger's claw. This gentleman is evidently superior to a petty regard for appearances ; his shoes are unlaced, his waistcoat unbuttoned, his shirt torn across the front, and he is sufficiently unclean in every respect to be a man of genius—his finger-nails alone should have made his fortune as a German professor. After a little conversation he speaketh me flatteringly. "Sir," said he, "I imagine by your talk that you have been used to something better than being in a place like this, where men feed and sleep like the brute which perisheth." I admit that I may have seen better days. "Ah !" said he, "I am a gentleman myself. I am a professional man, a doctor, and I had a large practice in Melbourne, but was unfortunate." Strange though it may appear, the fact of his having been "a doctor" in Victoria did not *per se* impress me much, but later on the conversation of my friend showed me that, whatever his failings may have been, or are, he is a man of education and talent, which it is sad to see brought to such an end. The doctor, it appears, was the man who did not reply to his name at muster, not having been back in time. Talking with his cronies he expressed a fear of being "jammed." I was curious as to the meaning of this phrase, and at last heard that it meant to have one's leave stopped. Thus one might be only "jammed for a day," or for a week or six months, whilst some even have "life." These latter are hardened offenders, who never go out but they return drunk, and so their leave is perpetually stopped, unless they like to take up their swag and walk out of the asylum, which

any inmate can do at a moment's notice. It appears that the doctor had received, after being in the asylum 20 months, "a walking ticket," that is, 14 days was allowed him to find employment, and at the end of that time he must clear out. It certainly seemed absurd to think that anyone attired like the doctor would obtain a professional situation. He said that he had no chance in Melbourne, but if the committee would pay his fare up the country and give him a shilling or two he would leave. "I'll ask them next Thursday," said he, "and they can but refuse." I thought to obtain some good points from the doctor, but he was full of his own affairs, and after he had exhausted those, went into dissertations on the character of the Hebrew kings. "Was it a Jew's harp which David played before Saul? if so it was a depraved musical taste." Again he tried to entangle me into a discussion as to the guilt of David in the Uriah divorce case. I avoided being dragged into a controversy, but the doctor could not be led to talk of the present. An incautious admission of mine that I knew St. Thomas's Hospital led him back to his student days, upon the delights of which he gently rambled until it was nearly eight o'clock, and time to go to bed, unless we wished to undress in the dark.

During the time I had remained with the group round the doctor I saw enough to convince me that the inmates did not waste their time on Saturdays. One man counted out 4s., which he had got whilst out (how, he did not say). One or two others perceptibly smelt of spirituous liquors, and evidently had money or friends to procure them enjoyment every Saturday. They seemed acquainted with all the public-houses in Melbourne. I had been endeavouring to obtain an insight into the place, and make friends of some of the inmates, and in

doing so had missed a prayer meeting or service of some kind in the dining-hall. Every night there is a religious meeting. "A d——d lot of church-going, but little religion," said the doctor. "All you can do here, sir, is to live, and eat and drink; there's no society at all, nothing to pass away the time, so some go to church every night." I am afraid the doctor's idea of society means a glass and a game of forty-fives. As I pass through the wards on the way to my bed I see men in all stages of undressing. One or two were at prayer. Their clothes, whether their own or supplied by the institution, all seemed warm and sufficient. When I get to my room I have a little talk with the wardman. He is an inmate, an active little man, but has one hand crippled by rheumatism. For the appointment of wardman he receives the magnificent salary of 12s. a month, and does not even obtain better rations, as he takes his meals in the hall with the rest. There is only one wardman not an inmate, and he is the attendant in the hospital ward. I undress and get into bed. The mattress is soft and comfortable, the sheets clean, the blankets warm, and the air much purer than I expected. But what is this apparition which steals noiselessly along the ward, feeling its way with a stick? The Heathen Chineese, as I live! Yes, a nearly blind Mongolian sleeps four beds distance from me. Many would say it is a judgment, and from an æsthetic point of view I certainly do feel that this is a most frightful experience; but practically I do not suffer any ill effects from the presence of "John," who is a harmless, quiet fellow, and, to their credit be it said, appears to be generally liked by his companions, who have not yet imbibed the prejudice against his colour. I suppose if this were in California we should be expected to hold an indignation meeting, or take up our swags and walk—not that I believe

such would be done there. Anyway, we are far too sensible to commit such absurdities.

Eight o'clock is certainly very early to go to bed, and quite foreign to my habits. I lie awake looking at the whitewashed walls and the lights of Melbourne to be seen through the curtainless windows. The gas has been turned down, but the white walls reflect the faint light from outside, and the dim shadowy forms of the inmates can be seen lying on their beds. Some, evidently old bushmen and used to camping out, have cunningly rolled the clothes around them to obtain and preserve the greatest warmth. This example I follow, whereby I afterwards come to grief. Two men at the end of the room are having a long talk respecting a certain M'Cabe, who I understand is a wardsman. This position they have both held, but appear to have become too infirm for it. M'Cabe they avouch was a strict Catholic born and bred, but since he came here has come out as a chapel-goer, as Holy Church is reported to be at a discount in this institution. Their talk dies off, but the inmates do not rest peacefully—balmy sleep is not for them. Many sit up in their beds, and cough and groan; others painfully turn and toss, moaning a prayer for rest, or for the morrow. The majority of these men are old, and their suffering—brought then most vividly home to my feelings—is a sad lesson. However, our instincts are essentially selfish, and being warm and comfortable myself, I in time drop off to sleep. Now the beds, though comfortable, are as narrow as the berths on an ocean steamer, and one has nothing as in those, to lie against, or obtain a purchase from. Wrapped up like a silkworm, I had felt very comfortable when I went off to sleep, but in dream-land my instincts revolted against being confined, as, like Arthur's knight, I have always slept in the habit of throwing

my arms about loosely (I spare the quotation). I presume I struggled, and so rolled over on to the floor. It was lucky I turned right over or I should have fallen on my nose, and my naturally repulsive-looking features would not have been improved thereby. As it was, I got a smart blow on the back of the head, and my fall aroused many of my neighbours. "What's that?" cried the man by whose bed I fell. "The Devil!" I ejaculated, trying to release my hand and rub my head. "Eh? What? Who is it?" he cried. By this time I had recovered myself, and explained matters with an apology, and climbing into bed again, I did not sleep silkworm fashion any more. I awoke about six, after an excellent night's rest. I am rejoiced to say that, like a disappointed fisherman, I did not get a single bite.

I had the pleasure of seeing one of the most glorious sights I have witnessed in Victoria—the rising sun. Lying in bed, I could see the gorgeous rose-coloured and orange-tinted gleams spreading over the Dandenong Ranges far to the north and south. Every minute the light increased in quantity and in magnificent gradations of colour, until at last old Sol himself, a ball of fire, arose to light the world through another day of pleasure and pain, birth and death. I have toiled painfully up the Rigi, and been disappointed in the weather. I have several times camped on Snowdon, and from its summit rejoiced at the glories of the early morn; and, most wonderful sight which these mortal eyes hope to see, lying by a camp fire in a South American forest, all around being black night, the cry of the jaguar having hardly yet ceased, looking up I have beheld, high in the sky, mountains of red gold, shining like the entrance to the Heavenly City—these were the snow-clad summits of the Andes, which received the rays of the sun, and were lighted up,

whilst the plains were still in utter darkness. But I have never seen a sun-rising which inspired me more than this one. Here I lay surrounded by disease and incipient death ; life seemed misery to all ; I was affected by the contagion of melancholy. But the glorious sun, for ever an emblem of immortality, drove these thoughts from my mind. It told me that there was no such thing as destruction or annihilation, and I leaped from bed wondering less than ever at the primal sun-worship which was universal throughout the world, and the remains of which, though they knew it not, are to be found in the rites of a society also universal. Taking my towel, I went to the lavatory, which is well supplied with hot and cold water. There is also a capital bath, as good as any in Melbourne, with a splendid shower. The discovery of this I hailed as a blessing, and after paying my devotions to the spirit of cleanliness, I felt like a giant refreshed with wine. These lavatories and baths are the best things in the asylum. On returning to the ward I found that most of the inmates had risen, and many were making their beds. I had overlooked this part of the programme. I have a dim recollection that long years ago it was a favourite pastime of my little sisters and self to assist at the bedmaking, which involved a deal of rolling about on feather beds and fighting with pillows, till the housemaid's patience was at length tired out, and she bundled us off by force, finding that the threat of "I'll tell your ma" was of little avail. But the experience I then acquired has been rusted by long disuse, as the beds one makes with rugs by camp fires are not complicated by mysterious arrangements of sheets and blankets. However, I now imitated my neighbours, and got along pretty well until I arrived at the final touch to be given to the counterpane. There is an extraordinary method in vogue here of folding the end of

this backwards and forwards, and in and out, so as to make it lie neatly and gracefully over the foot of the bed, and give them all an uniform appearance. I tried my best, but, am afraid, succeeded badly.

When I arrive outside I find it a glorious morning. Many of the inmates are promenading, and I take the morning air with the additional purpose of viewing the surroundings. Proceeding towards the front gate—outside the lodge of which sits the gnarled old Cerberus, who, despite his rough exterior, is very polite—I turn to the left, and, walking along the outside path, find that I am skirting the drying-ground of the institution. In this a few sheep are nibbling the grass ; and there is also a croquet lawn marked off, presumed for the use of the superintendent's family, as few of the inmates are young or supple enough to play that game. Keeping to the left, I come upon a small smoking shed, in which perhaps fifty people might be crowded. A little further on are the offices lying at the back of the building as originally erected, but now being at the side. Just past this—down by the fence and near a gate—is a cow-shed and poultry-yard. There are three cows in this shed, which have a history. They, I am told, belonged to an inmate, who, on entering, made the usual assignment of his property ; and the committee finding out that he possessed these, attached them ; the late owner has, at all events, the satisfaction of seeing them. There are some geese and fowls in the poultry-yard. I am now at the back of the asylum. This is devoted to a garden, in which vegetables of all sorts are grown, potatoes only being bought. Arrived at the end of the walk in this direction—at a corner where the iron fence connects with a brick wall—I see a strange sight. Underneath the wall—side by side for some fifty yards—are a quantity of old boxes, cases,

tubs, tin pails, &c.—anything which serves as a receptacle. One or two of these have locks, but the majority are merely covered with boards, bags, old pieces of sacking, cloth, or tarpaulin, kept in their places by bricks and stones. These contain the *lares et penates* of the inmates, who are only allowed to keep a small bag at their bedside, with a comb, brush, and razor. In the extreme corner one man had, Robinson-Crusoe-like, erected a little shed composed of some old boards, bags, and pieces of zinc. It was not as large as a good-sized umbrella; but, sitting on his box underneath this, he no doubt felt as happy as a king. Old coats and hats were hung on the wall over some of the boxes. Many of the proprietors of these rich stores were already at their treasures. The sight was a ridiculous, and yet painful, one. To see these poor old men hoarding up a lot of rubbish reminded one of the acquisitiveness of schoolboys, and was a proof how strong that passion is in the human breast. Completing the circuit, I arrive, at last, at the cottage of the superintendent, which is pleasantly situated in a nice garden, railed off from the other grounds. Spying through the bushes, I see an aviary and small conservatory, which denote the presence of a refined female taste. It looks a pretty little house, and one which Mr. M'Cutcheon must be sorry to leave, albeit he is one of the strongest advocates of the removal of the institution into the country.

At eight o'clock the bell rang for breakfast, and, following the rest, I easily found my place. We have a small plate of oatmeal porridge, a pannikin of tea, and dry bread, the same as at supper, and the service is in every respect the same—the superintendent being there, and keeping a watchful eye on our wants, and on the girls who wait on us. After breakfast I again walk round. This is Sunday, and many men are reading

Bibles, some aloud, others are hobbling about sunning themselves. Two men are carried out, and placed in Bath chairs. One of these, from his ponderous manner, has been christened "the Bishop;" he is quite a character. There is a great consumption of tobacco. I early run against "the doctor," and find that he is "jammed" for the day for not being in at muster last night. From him and from others I obtain some information as to the *status* of some of the inmates. Some would interview the first old man on crutches, and seeing that the majority were outwardly like him, would immediately put him down as a type; but the study of faces during meal-times assured me that all were not of one class. Amongst those who now help to fill the Benevolent Asylum there are some who were known years ago by their friends as men of repute, shining prominently in the social circle. Clothed in broad-cloth and fine linen, they were the respected heads of families. It is not fair to expatiate on the manner of their decline—in some cases it was their own fault, in others they were victims. Now their friends have forgotten them, hope is dead, energy and effort long since paralysed, body and mind alike blighted, they are helpless and worthless in the struggle for existence, and are only fit to drag on their few remaining years in this asylum. There is one clergyman of the Church of England (an Oxford man), two surgeons, a lawyer or two, merchants, officers of the Royal Navy (in the female ward there is a lady, widow of a R.N. captain) another Oxford man belonging to Christchurch, a Hungarian who held at one time a high legal office in his own country, a Swede an ex-army officer, a London tradesman from Oxford-street, a War Office clerk, a sailor who fought with Nelson at Trafalgar, and many of the class of *employés*. A short time back there was

the son of an Indian general in the asylum, but he has left. These are mixed up with a number of old Tasmanians, some of whom have been great ruffians, and can spin yarns to which the graphic horrors of *His Natural Life* appear milk-and-water stories. There is an old Irishman who was in the rebellion of '98. He has lived long, and has witnessed many struggles of his countrymen, all with the same object, whatever name they may give the particular outbreak, and still the red is above the green. A sailor, ex-master of a merchant ship, admits having been a slaver, but says the only thing which troubles his conscience was the fact of having, whilst first mate of a vessel trading to Charlestown, South Carolina, enticed the free negro cook on shore, whom the captain sold, and he pocketed twenty dollars for his share. Men there are here who have been in many of England's wars. Some draw a small pension, which, however, is always appropriated by the committee. There is a Staffordshire miner, who, upon my rashly admitting that I had heard of Dudley, launches into praises of its castle, and the prowess of the late "Tipton Slasher," champion of England. There is nearly every class of mechanics and labourers here, but they are all crippled, or so old as to be past work. One old woman known as "Granny," and who for many years kept an apple store on the beach at St. Kilda, is popularly supposed to be much over 100 years of age, and is the female patriarch.

Although the secretary to the Gospel-hall Mission vainly imagines that I sit on the seat of the scornful, and brands me as one to whom "the gospel of Jesus Christ is foolishness," still I like to attend church. I am unorthodox enough not to care particularly about the creed, so long as the divine teaching is not lost sight of. I was born and bred in the Church of

England, but early developing vagabond tendencies I refused to be confirmed—the Communion and Athanasian Creed sticking in my throat. A gentleman who knows my case has cautioned me to avoid meeting the new Bishop of Ballarat. He says that prelate rejoiceth exceedingly in capturing any stray sheep belonging to the mother land and church and restoring him to the fold. This I am not prepared for; my godfather must still bear the burden of my sins. But I have no prejudice against the church, and was glad to hear that its services would be held morning and afternoon in the dining-hall. At half-past 10 the bell rang for a few minutes, and I made my way to the hall. I found that a temporary pulpit or desk had been placed at one end of the longest wing; by its side was a small harmonium, behind which sat a young lady of pleasing appearance—a volunteer worker, evidently, in the good cause of administering religious consolation to the inmates of the Benevolent Asylum. About 100 were present, half of them women. The majority of both sexes were old and infirm. They paid little apparent attention to the service, but with closed eyes dosed away the time. I believe that most of them come merely for the sake of shelter, and to pass away the tedium of Sunday, which is a particularly long day in the asylum. If it be true that many of them attend all the services of the different denominations held throughout the week, shelter and distraction must certainly be their motive in so doing. Their religious opinions, to say the least, must be rather mixed. Most of the women wore the stuff or alpaca dresses and the cotton bonnets provided by the institution, but a few retained the remnants of faded prosperity and gentility. One old lady sported a respectable moustache, and her size and general appearance reminded me much of Falstaff in the character of

the Fat Woman of Brentford. The blind Chinaman, my ward mate, was also in church. It appears that he and his companion, who left the asylum a short time back, have both been baptized and received into the fold by the truly Eastern and poetically appropriate names of Barnabas and Ebenezer. This was Ebenezer. I would have given a little money to have known his thoughts on the service. I noticed that he had not cut off his pigtail, the sacrifice of which I believe fully denotes that a Chinese has abandoned the faith of his fathers. I hope Barnabas and Ebenezer will not backslide. The service was read by a layman, a little man, who may be a Scripture-reader or a volunteer. He read well, but the singing was execrable, being a series of breakdowns. Good singing is a great attraction, and an aid to devotion, and to old people must be a great treat. It is a pity a volunteer choir cannot be organized for the asylum services. They understand the necessity of this at the Gospel Hall, where the music is lively and inspiring. During the service all remained sitting except during the reading of the creed. It was altogether a dismal, dreary service, only enlivened by the flights of two swallows, which may have their nests inside. These darted round and round underneath the vaulted roof, and their proceedings were watched with great interest by a couple of cats, which licked their lips wickedly, and evidently wondered if swallow meat was good. We had the customary toast of the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, the rest of the Royal Family, His Excellency the Governor, the Bishop and clergy, &c.—I beg pardon, I mean, we paupers and cripples prayed for the same high and mighty ones. This, no doubt, is another instance of my perverseness, but its incongruity struck me forcibly. A sermon was read by the officiator, the text from

Isaiah. I do not know if it was one of his own, or by "an eminent divine." It was dull enough for either. Shortly after noon the sermon was over, and we all marched out, many being shaken by the hand and kindly questioned by the gentleman who conducted the service.

At one o'clock the bell rang, and proceeding to the hall I ate my first dinner in the asylum. This, being Sunday, consisted of roast meat and potatoes, with a small portion of boiled rice afterwards. The meat was good, and there was a sufficiency to satisfy appetite. The superintendent every morning goes to the meat market and purchases the day's supply, and the asylum is supplied with as good meat as there is in Melbourne. Of course, in the process of cutting up portions for some hundreds of people there is a good deal of hacking about, and it does not present the most tempting appearance upon your plate, but this is not likely to prejudice many of the inmates. The superintendent is present at dinner, as at every meal, and everything goes quietly and with clock-like regularity.

After dinner I again walk round the grounds and interview the inmates. Many of these appear to always select the same spots, where they congregate and sit and smoke. As I approached each coterie I was at first viewed with suspicion, but little by little I managed to pick up many scraps of information, which will be found in this article. The nicknames which the prominent members of the community have had conferred upon them are most amusing. There are "The Pirate," "The Smuggler," "Badger" (the slaving sailor before mentioned), "Quicksilver Jack," "Garibaldi," "The Bodysnatcher," "Jacky-all-to-Pieces," "The Nurses," "Pet," "Billy Buttons," "Nipper," &c. Many, I am told, are "Whitechapel birdcatchers," whatever that may mean. But the man whose name is often heard,

and who appears most popular, is "Scandalous Jack." I have a great desire to see this worthy, but he is out on leave. The feeling everywhere met with, which I afterwards found to be general, is one of discontent with their lot. "It's a miserable place," "A place for a dog to live in," are the expressions heard on all sides. As a rule, the inmates appear to be thoroughly ungrateful for the shelter and food they gratuitously receive. Each man has his own pet troubles and wants which he cannot get supplied, and it is natural that he should grumble. Every man is essentially selfish, and thinks only of his own case. This is natural, especially with old people. Leading the talk on to the officers, I was pleased to hear the favourable opinions expressed about the superintendent's management of the institution. Some few had complaints, if they thought they had been harshly dealt with in the matter of being "jammed;" but the prevalent feeling was, as expressed by one man—"Mr. M'Cutcheon is the best man we could get. We'll never get a kinder man over us." From a three days' experience in the institution I agree with this remark, and the cleanliness, order, and discipline maintained reflect great credit on his organisation. Mrs. M'Cutcheon, the matron, I only saw once in the building. She carries with her an atmosphere of good looks, good humour, and kindly sympathy, which must be refreshing to whoever is brought in contact with her. I am quite inclined to believe the "Doctor's" statement, that "she is one of the best women in the colonies," and can understand that she is a general favourite, and has great influence over both the male and female inmates. Twice during long years of service the superintendent has had a holiday, and during his absence Mrs. M'Cutcheon managed the institution, and it is said that during

that time the inmates did everything in their power to avoid giving trouble, and many volunteered assistance, and did work which they would not have done if the superintendent had been at home. This speaks well for the feelings engendered by years of supervision, and for the manner in which that must have been conducted.

If there be any truth as to the benefit which is said to exist in "seeing ourselves as others see us," Dr. Heath ought to be very much obliged to me, and will derive much good from the perusal of the following opinion of the inmates. According to their statement, Dr. Heath is a man after Brough Smyth's own heart. He is harsh, brusque, and unsympathetic, and is a regular terror to the inmates. The general statement is that he is so much disliked that none will go to him, unless they are very ill. They say that he does not properly attend to his patients, and the inmates of the hospital-wards complain that he is very loath to increase their diet or give them any extra comforts. As far as I could judge, the dietary scale and allowances to patients at the Melbourne Hospital are far better than at the Benevolent Asylum. I am only giving the opinions of the inmates as to the doctor's character. He may be a very estimable gentleman, but when the unanimous voice is against him I think there must be some ground of complaint. In institutions of this kind we generally find that the doctor is the popular man and the superintendent disliked. Here it is the exact reverse, and there must be some cause for it. The *vox populi* states that his predecessor was kind and attentive. I have been told that the doctor detected some cases of malinger in the hospital, and had them turned out, but that would scarcely affect the popular voice; people here are too much occupied with their own troubles and too purely selfish to care

much about the misfortunes of others. Each man here speaks for himself, and from his own point of view, as to his treatment. Dr. Heath has his lines in a pleasant and easy place. The average number of patients in the hospital wards is between 150 and 200. The majority of these are old men and women, chronic invalids, who require little medicine or attendance, but just sufficient extra nourishment or comforts to enable their lamp of life to flicker out peacefully. One visit a week to these would be sufficient unless *in extremis*, and the medicine or diet week after week may be noted down "*idem*." A number of other patients are seen in the dispensary, the days of attendance at which are only Mondays and Thursdays, and I am told a man must be very ill indeed who dares to risk a snubbing by troubling the doctor on any other day. This seems a great farce. A resident medical officer is kept, yet inmates are only allowed to consult him (unless seriously ill) on two days a week.

There is great talk amongst the inmates about the proposed removal of the asylum to Sunbury. The feeling is generally against it. They consider that it will be a great hardship in depriving them of the opportunity of seeing their friends on their weekly leave of absence. "We'll have no enjoyment at all then," says one man; "It'll be just the same as a prison then," says another; "I won't stop in if it is moved," says a third. From their point of view, it will be a hardship being shut off from the world in the country and removed from all chance of seeing their friends. But from the other point of view, as expressed by Mr. M'Cutcheon in the last annual report, it may be an advantage. He says—"It is too handy, too convenient, in fact, for the inmates now in the building, and it holds out undue inducements for others to become inmates. Were

there a little more self-denial involved in becoming an inmate, and were the inmates' facilities for visiting and being visited by their friends not so numerous, I venture to say that such perseverance in seeking admission as is now seen would not always be manifest, nor would the relatives of inmates be so willing to leave them as a burden upon the charity of subscribers and the bounty of Government. A few miles' distance would, therefore, in my opinion, prove a strong check upon abuse of privileges and comforts." From much that I saw and heard, I believe that this view is a correct one. Many express the fear that the country quarters, wherever they may be situated, will not be so comfortable as the present ones; but I hope the committee will not retrograde from the standard of cleanliness and convenience they have at present set up. However much they grumble at the asylum, many inmates who have been in Sydney compare it most favourably to the institution there. According to their account, that has not much improved since 1862, when, at an inquiry by a committee of the Legislative Assembly, much of the evidence was said to be too shocking for publication. One inmate said it was impossible to keep clean, as they never had clean clothes. Once a new pair of trousers was given to him on a visit from the bishop, but afterwards they were taken away. In her charitable institutions, Victoria seems far ahead of New South Wales. Later on in the afternoon there is the church service in the dining-hall. A clergyman officiates, and the attendance is about the same, and composed of the same individuals, as in the morning. After church there is the muster of those who have been out on leave, and then tea-time soon comes round. One meal here is the *facsimile* of another. After tea many go off to bed; and some remain to a service—Wesleyan, I believe—which is held in

the hall at night. I, however, prefer to stroll round the gardens, and, failing to capture any inmate of ordinary intelligence, I join two of the maid-servants who, arm-in-arm, are walking in the cool of the evening. The committee need not hold an investigation on this case. Our conversation was as dull as in the politest society ; and whilst I—remembering certain instructions given to me by a gentleman who understands this sort of thing—tried to make myself agreeable, I also acquired a little information. I trust, however, that my companions will always think that it was the charms of their society that attracted me. I was amused to hear from them that my character and person were being actively canvassed. Some said I was a detective, because I “looked at everything so sharp,” but the prevailing opinion was that I came out by the *Durham* on her last trip, fell amongst thieves *à la* New Chum, and so my friends put me in the Benevolent Asylum.

To bed again before eight ; seldom or never have I been so virtuous. My experience in the ward is exactly the same as before. I again have a good night's rest, and do not fall out of bed this time. On Monday morning we are most of us out by seven o'clock. One can easily see that a fresh week has begun ; there is life and bustle everywhere. In the laundry, which is between the dining-hall and the kitchen, girls are already working. The washing and cooking here is all done by steam power, and there is a capital boiler and small engine, which, amongst other things, turns a washing-machine. Clothes are being hung out to dry. The horse and cart are being taken out of the stable, and the carpenter's, tinsmith's, and cobbler's shops are open. In the carpenter's shop they do all the necessary repairs, and make the coffins ; and I have been consoled with the assurance that, if I die in the asylum, I shall

have "as good a coffin as there is in Melbourne." I reply, I "donate" my carcase to the "body-snatcher," to be sold to the Melbourne Hospital at the current rate. The stores and one or two of the shops are situated on the ground-floor of a long building called "Barracouta ;" on the floor above are a few single rooms, which are occupied by old married couples. Sloping from one side of this building is a low shed devoted to the interesting pursuit of oakum-picking. I make a tour of all these sites of industry before breakfast, and also explore the linen-room, which is in charge of one of the inmates, a very polite little gentleman, formerly in the Royal Navy, now doubled up from wounds and rheumatism. Here all the sheets, &c., belonging to the different wards are kept. Every week a clean sheet is issued to each bed ; and to each inmate a clean pair of moleskin trousers, a shirt, and a pair of socks. Clean underclothing is issued fortnightly. This attention to cleanliness is one of the greatest features in the asylum, and is the only approach to that luxury which many people outside are under the impression the inmates riot in. After breakfast, every one, except the chronic invalids, starts to some employment : some assist the gardener, others are employed in the various shops, stuffing mattresses, tinkering pannikins, cobbling boots, patching trousers, hammering coffins, or picking oakum. Others are engaged about the house ; some specially detailed to examine the bedsteads and extirpate vermin ; a few assist the cook by peeling vegetables, and three or four are employed in the office or stores. About half of the women inmates do very little. They are chiefly old and very infirm, and attending upon themselves is as much as they are equal to. The rest, some ninety in number, are engaged in their dining-room knitting socks, making men's shirts and their own dresses

and underclothing. Everything of this sort is done on the premises. A forewoman is appointed over them, under the supervision of the matron. They work the same hours as the men. In the dining-hall there is also a separate library for women, the books, however, very much worn and dilapidated.

There is an overseer of work, who walks round seeing that no man is skulking. The superintendent sets every new chum to a job the most fitting for him ; but not waiting for orders I entered, and took my seat in the oakum-shed. I should think about one hundred and fifty men were here ; a dozen or so were working at tailoring, and the remainder oakum-picking. At one end *The Argus* is being read, at the other *The Age*. Wishing to know the news, and also to assist my fellows, I offered to relieve in reading *The Argus*. Now, I have always rather prided myself upon my powers as an elocutionist, and have thought that my platform readings were appreciated ; but whether it was owing to the fact that I was a new chum, or that I could not assume the monotone they were used to, I could give no satisfaction. I read too fast, or too slow, or they could not understand me, so I gave up the job in disgust, and took to picking oakum. Of this I certainly did very little, as it was my first attempt, and I do not consider that I should ever be a success in that line of business. I picked enough, however, to make my fingers very sore, and render writing this a painful operation.

The inmates took a great interest in the newspapers. Accidents and offences were most popular, the great jewel robbery in London was a success, and Scotch Jock's will afforded opportunity for sly witticisms as to their own testamentary dispositions. The wealth of A. T. Stewart seemed fabulous to them. The supply of newspapers to be read

during work is really a great boon to the inmates. I would give something to be present when they hear these lines. The work done in the shed is very light. Men go in and out when they like, and appear to be under little restraint. They are required to pick about 38 lb. of oakum a month. If they do this, they are given five plugs of tobacco; if less, three or four; those who do no work being allowed two. I am afraid it would be a long time before I should earn more than two plugs at oakum picking. The shed is very low and close, and thick with oakum dust. In the summer it must be anything but a desirable working-place. I am told it is as hot as Hades. At twelve o'clock most of the crowd give over work, but a few still picked away, and the tailors were working merrily at their benches. I had been sitting next to the "Body-snatcher," who was, so he says, formerly a schoolmaster in the Royal Navy. He tells me that his brother, Captain ———, is now one of the poor knights of Windsor, and several other brothers, officers in the army or navy, have fallen under the British flag in various parts of the globe. He is a nice, pleasant old gentleman, and politely takes and introduces me to "Scandalous Jack." This celebrated individual is a cripple, a comparatively young man, now engaged in tailoring, which he has picked up since he has been here. He is a fellow of infinite jest and most excellent fancy, and I am not surprised at his popularity. By his side is an old man, who is carefully working a piece of embroidery, one of those long strips of linen-work which ladies pass their time in cutting holes in and sewing them up again. The Body-snatcher, and Scandalous Jack, with myself, have some rare jokes, and I solemnly bind myself apprentice to the latter, to learn the art and mystery of tailoring, for a premium of two plugs of tobacco, and find my own "tucker."

By one o'clock I have a good appetite for dinner. To-day we have soup and boiled mutton, potatoes and bread, all good and plentiful. This is the dinner for four days of the week. Sunday's dinner we have seen ; on Thursday there is also roast meat, and Wednesday is *un jour maigre*, on which the bill of fare consists of soup, potatoes, and boiled rice. On Fridays, members of the Roman Catholic faith may have fish. The one great evil in the dietary scale is the want of fresh vegetables. Potatoes only are bought, and the present garden does not appear to afford more than sufficient of cabbage, carrots, onions, &c., to supply the soup. Now, fresh green vegetables and salads are in this country, and in the hot months especially, nearly a necessity, and I hope, when the Asylum is moved, enough garden ground will be secured to produce an ample supply for the inmates. I shirk the oakum-shed during the afternoon, and acquire information elsewhere. The night comes on wet and misty, and now I find out the greatest evil connected with the asylum. There is no place of shelter for the inmates during the bad weather. According to the rules you must, unless in the hospital ward, leave your room at seven in the morning, and not return till seven at night. You may be working under cover during the daytime, but at five the shops and oakum shed are closed, and after tea time there is absolutely nowhere for the inmates to go except the small smoking shed, or the religious services in the dining-hall. A wet Sunday must be a frightfully miserable day here. There really should be some place where the inmates could be under cover, and read or play a game of draughts, until bedtime. It certainly is anything but in keeping with the name of the institution to make poor inmates herd together under a small shed or on the lee side of the building,

trying to obtain shelter from the winter's storm and rain. The books in the present library are nearly all worn out, but there is little use in replacing them if no place is provided for reading during the winter months. This wet weather disgusted me with the institution, and on the morrow I left, perfectly satisfied with my experience.

Is this charity seriously imposed upon? is a question of the day. After seeing all the patients, mingling amongst them, and listening to their talk for three days, I think I, as far as my judgment goes, must decide in the negative. That there are men here who have small amounts of money, or whose friends might keep them, if so inclined, seems perfectly true. But none of these men are able to earn a living, and their means will not keep them outside. The maintenance and attendance, which the committee calculate to cost £25 a-head inside, could not be obtained privately in the case of a confirmed cripple or invalid for £100. In a rule which the committee has adopted not to admit paying patients, I think they are wrong. Many men, or their friends, would pay £20 or £40 a year for such care as they obtain in the asylum, when, if pay is refused, they will most likely be, and, in fact, are, got in without. Hundreds have been yearly refused admission to the institution for want of room, and, according to the superintendent's report, "numbers of these can only be regarded as deserving cases, some of them indeed in a state of pitiable destitution and chronic disease." It is just these people who are not likely to know any influential subscribers, or have interest with the committee. It is to be hoped that the new asylum, wherever it may be, will be large enough for all, and that cases such as mentioned, and those who can contribute something, may all be accommodated there. The committee, I am

informed by inmates, are very strict in their examination of applicants, and if there is any deceit, it lies primarily with the subscriber or governor who certifies that "he has minutely inquired into the circumstances of the bearer, and satisfied himself that he is a fit object for reception to the asylum." But, to avoid all chance of being imposed upon, I would recommend to the committee a plan now adopted by some of the London charities. These employ an officer (generally an ex-policeman, or some one used to similar work), to whom every application for assistance is handed. He has personally to ascertain, as far as he can, the truth of the statements contained therein, by visiting the applicant and his friends, and whoever introduces him. A smart man will soon find out all about the case, and, making his written report, that and the application are decided upon at the next board meeting. But I think a man like Nicholson, who, at his death, was found to have been possessed of £2,000, would deceive a smart private detective, for the inmates tell me that a more miserable-looking old wretch was seldom seen, and the whole establishment was astonished at the news that he had left money.

The committee appear to adopt every means to find out if the inmates have money, and every now and then some unfortunate who discovers himself by his indiscretion is looted. I heard of one case of a woman who carried a large sum of money about with her for years, and then dropped it in the ward. Some say it was £200, and the lowest report stated £40, but of course it was confiscated. Smaller sums of money, varying in value, are periodically annexed. On entering the Benevolent Asylum one takes a vow of poverty, and owns nothing more in this world, as the assignment you make covers any property you may acquire or inherit in the future. Of course, in

the event of a man leaving, this would not stand in equity ; and, in fact, it has been disregarded, as cases are quoted of one inmate coming into a legacy of £500, and leaving the asylum without paying anything ; and of another inmate who learned dispensing here, and going out got a berth as a chemist's assistant, then going up-country opened a store on his own account, and is now mayor of a prosperous town. According to the terms of the assignment, all his real and personal property now belongs to the asylum. Inmates who are in receipt of pensions have the same appropriated by the committee ; and, since some three years back, when an inmate was found in the possession of a large sum of money, and acknowledged regularly receiving same by post, letters are opened by the superintendent, in the presence of the owner, and any money found therein is handed to the committee. This was a point I had noticed before I read "A Mother's" letter in *The Argus*. As she says, it does seem hard that small sums cannot be sent to inmates to purchase them little luxuries ; but the principle appears to have been adopted to detect those who receive large sums. I read the superintendent's reply, and made inquiries from inmates if it was correct, and if the letters were never read. They said, "No ; the super. nips the end off with a pair of scissors, and feels if there is a note or cheque inside, and if not hands it to us. You mind and don't have any money sent here." I said I would not. However, many of the inmates get money from their friends when they go outside—not much, perhaps, but enough to enable them to enjoy themselves once a week. One man said, "I've got a pound or two yet, but nobody knows where it is." Another man was pointed out to me as the reputed owner of a house, but its situation was equally vague. If there are

many who have money they keep it to themselves, as the frequent raids have taught them caution, and it is said by some that there is a "secret police" in the asylum. On the whole, however, I think that only a few of the inmates can from any source obtain even a few shillings a week. The temptation, except in the chronic cases of disease, to impose on the committee is very slight; the food, if good and plentiful, is very plain, and the fare is monotonous; there is certainly no luxury, although an amount of cleanliness and decency which, compared with the Immigrants' Home, is striking. The many restrictions imposed upon an inmate would soon disgust any man who was enabled to live outside.

I have mentioned the feeling as to the doctor and the great want of a hall for reading and shelter. One other piece of advice I may tender to the committee. There are many of the inmates employed as petty officers, wardsmen, storekeepers, clerks, &c.; some of these at present receive 12s. a month, others 5s., some nothing. Now their labour must at least be worth something considerably more than their keep—£25 a year. I would suggest that these posts, which, if the asylum is removed to Sunbury, are likely to be much multiplied, should be made valuable, and held out as the reward of merit, good conduct, and ability. Give these men a salary of a few pounds a year, and let them have the status and liberty of officers; give them also a separate mess, and a uniform.

In conclusion, I must apologise to "Scandalous Jack" for not fulfilling the terms of my indentures; but although an absconding apprentice, I am willing to pay the premium at any time, and to him, the "Bodysnatcher," and other gentlemanly inmates, I return my thanks for courtesies received during a stay of three days in the Benevolent Asylum.

OUR LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

RECORD OF THE EXPERIENCES OF A MONTH IN KEW AND
YARRA BEND.

Que diable allais-je faire dans cette galère ? Not that it is at all surprising that a vagabond should become a lunatic—gaols and asylums are his natural destinations. But not as a patient have I spent my time in these institutions. The evil of the present system of patronage and political influence in securing Government appointments is forcibly illustrated by the fact that, from the 15th of June till the 15th of July, I held the post of attendant at the asylums, at a salary of £1 a-week—not much, certainly, but then I had the satisfaction of thinking I was serving my country. Yes, I attained the height of my ambition by holding a Government office ; but, as might be imagined from my published antecedents, I had not the sense to keep it, and, in resigning, I have lost the only chance which may ever present itself to me of place and preferment in Victoria.

To obtain a post in our asylums it is necessary to have a friend with political influence, who writes or speaks to the Chief Secretary (the political head of the department), requesting your appointment. You then send in your application, with testimonials, &c. ; next, you are examined as to bodily fitness by Dr. M'Crae, the chief medical officer of the Government ; and then you are sent to Dr. Paley, the inspector of asylums and permanent head of the department, for examination as to general fitness. The qualities necessary to make a good attendant can only be proved by time and experience. Accordingly, under the new system, which has been in force the last twelve

months, you are appointed on probation for three years ; until the end of that time your engagement being only a weekly one, Having passed through all these ordeals, on a vacancy occurring at any of the asylums, you will receive an order of appointment from Dr. Paley to the medical superintendent. Armed with this, on the morning of the 15th of June, I walked from Yarra Bend to Kew to assume my duties as a servant of the Government. Wooded banks and winding river make beautiful surroundings to both Yarra Bend and Kew. The finest sites around Melbourne seem to be monopolized by public institutions, as, indeed, it is proper they should be. The reserve at Kew, I understand, was originally intended as the site of the new Government-house. Certainly, our Viceroy would have been in a safer position there in the event of that Russian gun-boat bombarding Melbourne. However, from a distance, Kew Asylum might be taken for a palace. Its *façade* is imposing, the Italian towers break the monotony of the architecture, and it looks a far more stately building than Sir George Bowen's present abode ; and as regards desirability for residence, the situation is much superior. Crossing the wooden bridge over the Yarra, through the gate, up the bank, and mounting some steps, I found myself within the palings enclosing the front grounds of the asylum. There is a large grass plot, enclosed in iron rails, round which is the entrance drive, a gravelled walk running the whole length of the asylum, bordering a flower bed, in which praiseworthy attempts are being made at floriculture. What first strikes a stranger are the enclosures in front of the wings on each side, which during fine weather are occupied by male and female patients respectively. They appear to be apparently confined only by low walls, a few feet high—you cannot see the deep dry moat or

"ha-ha" on the other side. This is an excellent arrangement, as it enables the patients to see the outside world, and does away with that gaol appearance and feeling inculcated by the walls of the old asylums. Glancing at the inmates of these front yards, a stranger would see little in their behaviour to show that they are insane. A few may lean over the rail at the edge of the ha-ha and curiously scan his advent, but not more so than would very likely be done by the boys and girls of a country boarding school. I certainly aroused little curiosity as with the humble tread of a probationer I made my way to the only entrance, and presented my order of appointment to the medical superintendent, Dr. Robertson. I was then referred to a clerk, who took my signature to a printed form of agreement, by which I bound myself to serve the Government and to avoid all sorts of sins of omission and commission, and rendered myself liable to pains and penalties for such. Also I subjected myself to the regulations dated 25th November, 1874, which I was gravely told allowed me to be dismissed by the Chief Secretary at a week's notice, without giving me power "to apply for a board." I was rather sorry for this, as it would have been good fun to break all rules and regulations, and then get a board to judge my case and cost the country £500. I was then presented with a copy of the regulations for attendants, which are thirty-nine in number, and comprehensive in detail. The messenger then took charge of me, and conducted me through the door on the right-hand side of the entrance hall, which leads into the male quarters, that on the other side leading to the female wards, and these being the only entrance to each. At the end of the passage is the office of the head attendant, off which is the room for visitors, rather a dismal place. Here, after waiting some time, entered to me a tall

spare man, with greyish hair and whiskers, of smooth manner and quiet voice—this was Mr. Trumble, the head-attendant. He questioned me little, but informed me that I was appointed to B (the hospital) Ward, where all young hands were sent to be broken in, and consigning me to a fellow attendant I was conducted thither.

Behold me, then, at last fairly settled down in a Government billet, being the seventh attendant in B Ward. Here I remained for a week, and I could fill several columns of *The Argus* with the account of my experiences there. This is the first ward on the ground floor in the front wing, and is entirely devoted to hospital cases, epileptics, and those suffering from paralysis, these two latter classes being specially prohibited by the regulations from being sent up stairs. There are generally between sixty and seventy patients in this ward. At the entrance there is a large dormitory, which was built for a day-room, and should be used as such, but owing to the number of patients is now filled with beds. In a passage to the right of this is the scullery, bathroom, closet, &c., and beyond these two more dormitories. Coming back to the first dormitory, you enter a long corridor, the ward proper, lighted by windows of small panes of thick plate-glass, looking on to the front yard, which only open for six inches at the top and bottom; and on the other side there are nine single cells, and a large fireplace with a locked guard. At the end of the ward there is a small room out of which is the entrance to another large dormitory, to the store-room, and to two sleeping rooms for attendants. The iron bedsteads in the dormitories are only raised a few inches from the floor, to prevent helpless patients injuring themselves by rolling out in the night. In the cells the beds are laid on the floor. The rooms are very crowded, the

beds seeming far too close together ; and although the rooms are high, giving perhaps the needful amount of cubic feet of air to each patient, there is a great want of extra superficial space. The hospital ward is considered the worst in the asylum, and the duties the most disagreeable. I think that none but skilled attendants, and those whose extra pay would reconcile them to the duties, should be appointed here, yet the contrary is the case. With the exception of the attendant in charge, who gets £130 a year, being £10 more than any other senior attendant, all are fresh hands, the majority being £1 a week men. As new men are appointed, the seniors are draughted off to other wards, and this they always look forward to as a happy release.

Attendants' duties commence at half-past six in the summer and seven o'clock in the winter months, by which time they must be in the wards, and have opened all the dormitories and single rooms. At half-past six the bell rings, and shortly afterwards the night attendant rouses all hands. I shared a sleeping room with two other attendants, there was little enough space for us, and although the beds were good, and I had plenty of clothing, I was much disappointed at my quarters. I had fondly calculated on having a room, however humble, to myself, where I could write my vagabond notes. But as all the locks of the wards are alike, it was impossible to ensure a minute's privacy, and I laboured under great disadvantage in making memoranda. Turning out at half-past six in the morning is very obnoxious to me, except in tropical climates, or for the purposes of sport. It is my custom in Victoria to lie in bed till the world is well aired, when I am awakened by the advent of two young gentlemen who have a friendly quarrel as to who shall wait on me, and compromise by a division of labour, one

carrying *The Argus*, and the other a cup of tea. During my month of hard labour at the asylums how I longed for a return to this truly vagabond and Bohemian way of commencing the day. There was no help for it ; I had to turn out with the rest. The dormitories and cells being all opened, the labour of washing and dressing the patients commenced. The clothes are not allowed to be taken into the dormitories, but are left round about the corridor. Many of the patients know where they have left their things, but there is a general feeling of community of apparel amongst them, and I noticed one man who hardly wore the same clothes two consecutive days. But the majority of patients in this ward are old, infirm, and paralytic, and have to be dressed by the attendants, or the patients who assist in the work of the ward. And let me notice here that but for such patients the whole work of the asylum would come to a standstill. In all the wards, as in this, there are two or three inmates besides the number who do the rough work, and require looking after, who are trusted by the attendants with everything. The keys are given them, and they go in and out of the wards about the work of the day with a regularity and a spirit of duty exceeding anything to be found amongst the attendants. So in this work of dressing the infirm the attendants chiefly look on, giving a hand now and then. One is on duty in the scullery, which also acts as a lavatory. Armed with a brush and comb, he smooths the disordered locks of those who are able to crawl there, and afterwards, with a basin, soap, and piece of flannel, goes the rounds, and wipes the faces and hands of the infirm. Another attendant takes the key, and opens the shutters of the cells ; the windows in the dormitories are also all thrown open, beds taken out to air, clothes changed, &c. All this is done by patients,

under the direction of an attendant, with a regularity equal to that at the Benevolent Asylum. Some then set to work and make the beds, and brush up all the dust preparatory to washing the floors. This being done, it will be very near breakfast time—eight o'clock—and the high-backed forms are placed round two long deal tables. The patients are then led, or dragged, or carried to their places, whilst some go to the kitchen for the breakfast. This, for one table, consists of two large tins half-full of bread-and-butter, which had been broken up the night before and steamed to soften the crust.* Filling these with tea, the attendants mash up the compound, and distribute a certain portion of the “sop,” in tin pannikins to the patients, who eat it with spoons. This food is for the epileptic patients, who are supposed to be always in danger of choking if they take anything more solid. At the other table tea and bread-and-butter is served. Most of the patients in this ward have their meals inside, though some few go to the general mess-room. “Special cases” in the single rooms have to be fed, as have also some of the most infirm. Breakfast is soon over, and then the patients are cleared away on one side whilst the work of scrubbing the floors is proceeded with. This continual necessity of assisting the patients to move causes the extra labour in the hospital ward. It can be simplified, however, by passing one’s arm round a patient’s throat *à la garotte*, and lifting him by the chin, dragging or pushing him before you. I never tried this, but saw it done by others with great success. Certainly, when you fling the man down on to his seat, it seems to have taken all remaining sense out of him for a time; but that is of little consequence. If a man who is able to get about does not make haste in dressing himself, or is troublesome whilst washing, or in any other way, it is easy to yell at him as a brutal

carter does at a horse, and encourage him by a "clout" on the side of the ear—that is, a blow given with full force with the flat of the hand. It will not mark, but certainly will pain. It is very popular as a means of discipline, and especially in this ward, where there are such a number of troublesome cases. If, too, an epileptic idiot gets his mouth full of meat, to prevent his choking, the easiest way is to twist his arms behind his back till he disgorges. All these are little tricks of trade which it takes a new chum some time to get into. I looked on with admiration, but never attempted to perform such.

Between meal-times some of the patients of this ward are sent into the exercising-yard, but many are too infirm to be moved, and are seated on the forms around the fires. Many lead pure vegetable lives, having hardly the instincts of the animal. Perfectly harmless, they are paralyzed both in body and mind. The epileptic patients are more mischievous and troublesome. There is one boy with spaniel eyes, which he fixed on me with a wonderful expression of affection and trust, so often seen in a dog, and sometimes in a woman. This look seemed to appeal to me, and although, in other respects, he was anything but an interesting epileptic, I took quite a fancy to him. But I found he was not to be trusted at all, as he will appropriate the food and clothing of others. There is a crippled idiot, who progresses on his knees with a crab-like action. He is hideous and repulsive as any inmate of the "Cour des Miracles," his only utterance a vacant laugh. But he possesses enough sense to know his friends, and is harmless enough. There are two or three blind men, the most extraordinary of whom is a Jew, named Jacobs. He is a convert to Christianity, and much study of the Scriptures appears to have turned his brain. He overflows with texts on all subjects, but

labours under a delusion that Jesus was the son of Mary Magdalen. He is a very devout man, and before each meal says a long prayer, with his fingers curiously joined together, and stepping as if going up a winding staircase. This Jacobs is a source of great amusement to the attendants. Being a man stronger in mind and body than the majority of the patients in this ward, it seems that he feels any real or apparent neglect or ill-treatment, and complains of the same to the doctors. To counteract any complaints, I am told, none of the attendants give him their right names, but they are known to him by such euphonious appellations as Shovello, Laparatti, Pegollini, &c. And under such disguise they tell poor Jacobs wondrous tales:—Of how Temple (another attendant, who they describe as a clergyman) has purchased a horse which he calls “Jumping Jesus,” and has entered it for the Melbourne Cup. The amount of money which Temple spends on horses, wine, and women, they represent to Jacobs as something tremendous, and intimate that he has stolen it. The horror of poor Jacobs at Temple’s blasphemy is immense. Then a humorous attendant will steal near and pinch or push poor Jacobs, perhaps taking another blind man as a guard. Jacobs is easily excited, and, unable to see the real assailant, will seize and strike some harmless patient near to him. “Give it him, Jacobs!” will be the shout, and for a minute or two this couple of poor old men will be pummelling each other. Oh! it is rare sport, my masters. However, they are too feeble to hurt each other much, and are easily separated. Filled with such marvellous tales about Temple and others, told by those who can alone show the outside world to him, all that he now knows being seen through their eyes, it is no wonder that Jacobs is thought by the medical officers to be very

mad indeed, and that any complaints he may now make against "Shovello" or "Laparatti" are considered to be mere delusions. This system of giving blind men wrong names is another little trick of the trade, which is quite refreshing to a new chum. I was introduced to Jacobs as a friend of Temple's, and consequently incurred his disapprobation. I was also looked upon with great suspicion by a harmless being who fancied he was King Henry VII. This Royal personage is of anything but a cleanly nature, but nothing shocks him more than a request to be kissed, with which demand the attendants sometimes tease him.

The beds are all made, the floors scrubbed, and the matting down before ten o'clock, by which time inspection commences, and the superintendent, the two medical officers, and the head attendant go through all the wards. In this ward there may be a few cases which require a little extra attention ; but, as a rule, the health of the inmates of the asylum is remarkably good. The diet and enforced cleanliness have, I suppose, a great deal to do with this. A list of all patients receiving extra diet, or "medical comforts," is certified by the senior medical officer, who is very liberal in his allowance of such. These included porter, ale, brandy, sago, and beef-tea, and are served at eleven o'clock, when the sago and beef-tea are brought in cans from the kitchen. The attendant in charge of the ward dispenses the brandy, malt liquor, and tobacco, which latter is allowed to those who work either outside or in the wards. Inspection being over, the chief work of the day is felt to be done, although the attendants have various other duties to perform, such as looking after stores, dirty linen, &c. One, if not more, out of each ward may be on duty in the yards, and one will be away on his weekly leave of absence, each attendant

being allowed one day out of the seven. In the hospital ward an attendant has to walk up and down, assist infirm men, and look after epileptics. When these latter get a fit, the simple way is just to pull them on the floor, see that they are unconfin'd at the neck, and let them have it out. Now and then a blind man may walk on to them, which only makes it more amusing. Daily duty in the ward is anything but pleasant. Besides the sickly hospital odour, there is a peculiarly horrible smell, as of wild beasts, which it is said is a characteristic of madmen. At half-past twelve dinner is served : this consists, for the epileptics, of "mince," being meat, potatoes, and rice, chopped fine in a machine and stewed together ; soup is given to wash this down. At the other table there are meat and potatoes, the joints being brought in and carved by the attendants. The evening here is the same as the morning—a patient in a fit, or one whose clothes want changing, being the only break to the monotony, with the exception of the sport of teasing Jacobs. One of the attendants, perhaps, amuses himself by cutting some of the patients' hair. At five tea is served, the same as breakfast, and directly after tea many of the old men are undressed and sent to bed, those who occupy the single cells being locked in. There are a few books and papers to amuse those patients who are able to read them, but their number is small ; and as the evening wears on the majority find their way to bed. About half-past seven one of the medical officers pays another visit to the wards, generally accompanied by the head attendant. The superintendent may be with them, or may come before or afterwards ; but it is not easy to calculate on his visits. He is always through the wards twice a day, and has a disagreeable practice of dropping in upon us at any time. The medical

officers have not such a bad time of it. At inspection in the morning they are both present, but at night only one goes round. Generally, there is little sickness, and the formula, "All well here?" meets with an affirmative answer. Before eight o'clock all the inmates of the Hospital Ward are in their dormitories, the intervening doors locked, the gas turned out, and everything ready for the night watchman, who comes round and takes charge from the attendant of the ward. Then all is quiet, which is broken occasionally by the ravings of a Chinaman, who sometimes talks all night.

This is the ordinary routine of life inside the hospital ward, which, of course, is different, in many respects, from any other ward in the asylum. A variation to this is being placed on special duty, that is, to watch any particular case. There was one such case whilst I was in B ward. A man had driven his hand through one of the plate-glass windows, a task which none but a most powerful man could accomplish. The result was that his wrist was cut to the bone, severing muscles, veins, and arteries, and it was with difficulty that he was prevented from bleeding to death. Brought into a cell in the hospital ward, his wound sewn, and plugged, and bandaged up, he was ordered to be watched night and day, to prevent his tearing away the bandages. The poor fellow lay on his back, with his wounded arm propped up by pillows, and his other hand confined in "a glove." Now these gloves, which are unlike any other hand coverings in the world, are seldom used in the hospital ward, and are chiefly for refractory patients, or such as are in the habit of tearing their clothes. They are formed of two stiff flat pieces of leather, cut in the shape of a paddle, and sewn together. The hand being placed in this, it is secured by a locked strap at the wrist. Of course, this prevents a man using his hands to any

great damage to himself and others, but I think they might be improved upon. The edges of the gloves are very sharp and hard, and a strong man could give a nasty blow with them. I was on duty for several days with the "case" in question, with orders not to let him stir his wounded arm. He was a capital patient at first, and I should never have thought that he was an insane man. He took all his food quietly, thanked one for any attention, and what little he said was perfectly coherent. But as he grew stronger, his delusions returned. The glove worried him a great deal. "Will you be kind enough to take this off?" he asked me one morning. "Let me see, it's fastened, I think," I replied. Ah! yes, just get a key and undo it; you know it's the fashion to wear these here; we fasten them on with a key, you know, but I've lost mine." "They don't give me those gloves, so I haven't a key," said I; "if it's the fashion, you'd better keep it on." So I had to pacify him throughout the day. It was tiresome work sitting in a cold dark cell all day long, and but for the privilege of smoking would have been much worse. In thus allowing the consumption of tobacco, the public institutions of Australia are far ahead of those of the old world. Before I became an attendant it was intimated that I should very possibly shirk my duties, and get reprimanded and fined in consequence. But placed thus in charge of a sick man, although nursing is not my *forte*, I trust I did my duty to him as well as any other. At least, my "case" informed me that as I had been very kind and attentive to him, he would take me out, make me an immediate present of £5,000, and give me a salary of £100 a month. Up to the last day that I was in the hospital ward this man had always been very quiet with me, but on taking charge at six o'clock of that morning he was very excited, wanting to get up and go out. Sitting in the

chair by the side of his bed I talked to him quietly, when suddenly with his wounded hand he gave me a blow in the eye, and with the gloved hand a sharp dig in the epigastrium anything but pleasant. Then he jumped up and struck furiously at me again, but, on my guard this time, it was easy to hold him down on the bed. The great thing, of course, was to avoid injuring his arm and to prevent his moving it, and so, calling for help, two more attendants held him down in bed. He was still very violent, and when we moved him into another cell fought a good deal, and I had for half an hour great trouble in preventing his rising. At last he was quieter, and after I had given him a smoke, he said, "I think I've been dreaming. I didn't know where I was." "Yes, of course." "You see I awoke after dreaming, and I was excited and wanted to go out." "Yes." "Did I strike anyone?" "You punched me well," said I. "Well, I'm sorry. You must excuse it. You see I wasn't quite myself, and I didn't know you. You've always been very good to me, and I shouldn't like to hurt you." So my last dealings with this case were amicable ones; and I am glad to say he was soon up and about the ward, rapidly getting well. Struggling to keep his hand down, I managed to get a slight scratch from one of his finger nails, which, containing some blood from the wound, poisoned my finger, causing it to fester and be very painful for a couple of weeks. All these little accidents are what an attendant must expect.

This was my routine of duty inside the wards, varied by having every other evening, after six o'clock, to myself until half-past ten, at which hour attendants have to retire to rest. But I was soon placed on yard duty, and during my stay at the asylum certainly had more than my due proportion of that.

Of this, however, I was glad, as not only did I get fresh air and exercise, but it enabled me to see more of the patients. I was first placed on the "side yard," being, with two other attendants, on guard there from breakfast till dinner-time, and after that until tea. All the patients who are able to leave the wards, and are not working, are sent into the yards between these times, unless it should be very cold indeed. Behold me, then, at nine o'clock in the morning, marching up and down the side yard. This is the largest enclosure in the asylum grounds, and is nearly surrounded on three sides by the wings of the building, and on the other is separated from the paddock by the ha-ha and stone wall, 15ft. high. The ground is very rough and uneven in places, and is much washed away. It slopes considerably towards the north-east, and affords a magnificent view over Heidelberg and the Yarra valley, far away to the Dandenong Ranges. In fair weather or in foul this is a magnificent prospect, rich in trees and greenery, brightened or subdued by varying lights and shades. It is a good land and a fertile, which the Lord has given us to inherit, and the sight of which even a poor madman may enjoy. By the side of the wards there are some verandahs, and in the centre of the yard there is a large rustic-built shed or round-house, to afford shelter from the summer's heat or winter's rain. Still it is very cold here at times, and there does not appear to me to be sufficient classification of those who should take exercise. Except those on the sick list and very infirm patients, all are sent out of the wards, or none. And so in rough weather, the order issued by the head attendant is "all to be sent in;" whereas, in fact, many would be healthier if allowed to stay outside under shelter. Sometimes they are sent into the wards when a slight shower of rain falls; at others, they

are all kept out on a bitter cold day. The senior attendant in each ward is supposed to attend to this, and can send out and keep in whoever he chooses, subject, of course, to the inspection of the head attendant and superintendent. But the attendants like to get the patients out of the wards, as it leaves them less to do. There are between 200 and 300 patients in this side yard, being all known as the worst class, refractory cases, &c., although this classification appears to be a rather arbitrary one. In this yard, more than in any other place in the building, you recognize the fact that you are in a lunatic asylum. There is a mingled discord of singing, swearing, and howling. The name of the Almighty is perpetually shrieked out by one man in tones of supplication, whilst by his side another blasphemes horribly. On their knees there are others praying—one man passes his whole time in this way. Next to intemperance, religious mania appears to be the most fertile cause in filling our asylums. Many imagine and loudly proclaim they are Jesus. Some stand by the wall in exactly the same place day after day—scorched by the sun or pinched by the cold, they care not; others lie grovelling in the ha-ha, or under the walls. Some walk up and down paths worn by their daily tread, which they compass with a certain number of steps, muttering to themselves, or swearing at unknown foes; these are only disturbed by any one getting on their path, when, very likely, there will be a fight. Others fight with imaginary adversaries. One man has worn the ground away in a deep circle. Daily, at certain hours, he takes his stand here, and, shuffling his feet, at last plants himself firmly, and, raising his hat in his hand, appears to take an observation of the sun. He will stand thus for a minute, and then walking around will commence again, always

looking in the same direction. He is very quiet and harmless, but if you go near him, or trespass on his plot of ground, he will push you away, crying out, "Explain! explain!" which is all that he says. Another man, who is a magnificent whistler, walks round and round the shed, every now and then stopping and looking at the sun with a power of vision no sane man could possess. A black man from the West Indies salutes every one with the courtesy engendered in his race by long years of servitude. He is generally pleased to salute me as "Great Governor of Virginia," and when I first gave him some tobacco went down on his knees and kissed my feet. I should not have felt so shocked if he had knocked me down. There is another black man, with the quick roving eye of the East and the subtlety of a panther. There is an old Welshman, who curses and swears in his native language, which does not add to the harmony. These are noisy, but otherwise harmless cases. The quarrelsome, refractory, and destructive patients are known by being confined in "camisoles," canvas smocks, hats, boots, and gloves, all locked on them. The camisole is a modification of the old strait waistcoat; it is a loose canvas bag, with arms which are sewn into pockets at the side, and it is fastened at the back. The patient is enabled to move his elbows about, and although a mode of restraint, it is not painful. This is placed on quarrelsome patients to prevent their fighting. One of the best photographers in the colony and an ex-officer of the army are thus confined. The canvas smocks are generally placed on those who have a habit of tearing their clothes. It is fastened behind, and their hands are free, but there is nothing for them to tear. Those who have a mania for undressing themselves have gloves placed on their hands, and caps and boots locked on. All these

mechanical modes of restraint seem hideous, but they are absolutely necessary, as without these the wearers would have either to be confined to a padded room, or have an attendant specially engaged to watch each, an arrangement manifestly impossible.

But the noisy and refractory patients, although they at first force themselves prominently on your notice, are a small proportion of those in the yard. Camisoles are only placed on in extreme cases, and not more than three per cent. of the asylum patients are in restraint. In this yard I see, from every ward in the building, a number of poor, harmless men, who, imbecile to a certain extent, their minds having fallen into second childishness before the decay of their bodies, are certainly not, according to the ideas of the old world, fit inmates of a lunatic asylum. They are those who, in England, would be maintained by their friends, or in work-houses and alms-houses, and in Victoria should be in some such place as the Benevolent Asylum, in which they have a ward containing patients far worse than many at Kew. My attention was first drawn to this by a smart attendant—personal observation confirmed this—and it struck me more forcibly than anything in connection with the asylum. But since leaving my duties I find that this is a fact known and recognised by the authorities. Dr. Paley, in his report for 1870, says that one-third of the population of the insane asylums in Victoria would in England be kept outside, and in the following extract he shows how such cases are foisted on our asylums through the medium of police-courts, benevolent institutions, &c. He says :—

“When, for example, a destitute and weak-minded, though inoffensive, person is brought under the notice of the police, his committal to the lunatic asylum is the most direct and

certain mode of providing for him. Should there be a local benevolent asylum or hospital, the candidates for admission have to undergo a process of selection, in which an imbecile would generally be excluded. The choice seems then to be between the gaol and the lunatic asylum ; and there can be no hesitation in certifying that the patient is more suitable for care and treatment in an asylum than in a lock-up. It is charitable to the patient, and practically the most feasible course, to transmit him to an asylum. *Once within the walls, there is, for him, no outlet.* A general hospital, a benevolent asylum, or an immigrants' home can send a patient to a lunatic asylum, either through the police or by a private order signed by an officer of the institution and accompanied by certificates. But no one can be sent in a similar way from a lunatic asylum to one of the other institutions. Should an inmate be found to show no propensities rendering his detention in a lunatic asylum necessary, although from weakness of body or mind partly dependent on the help of others, there is no available way in which he can leave it."

In the report for 1873, Dr. Robertson, then acting-inspector, says—"Patients are frequently committed to asylums by the magistrates who might easily be kept under proper care and control by their relatives ; but under the present Lunacy Act it appears that magistrates have no alternative, inasmuch as every person whose mind is impaired in any measure may be regarded as 'a proper person to be taken charge of and detained under care and treatment' when their relatives refuse or neglect to take charge of them. It is not unfrequently found that unsuitable cases are likewise sent to asylums under Section XI. of the Lunacy Statute under order from friends or relatives. This section of the act offers strong inducement to some persons to

get rid of their insane relatives by forwarding them to asylums, and as the *facilities for getting into an asylum are greater than those for getting out*, such cases are liable to become a permanent charge upon the State." I do not know if any notice was, at the time, taken of the above opinions of the permanent heads of departments ; it certainly seems to me that a commission, or board of inquiry, was more needed to examine and report on this state of things than to settle the disputes of the female attendants at Kew. I really believe that there are patients so kept perfectly able to be let out into the world, but whose friends prefer paying (or perhaps not paying) a small sum to keep them at Kew out of the way. Here is poor old Peter ———, an honest old Irishman, reputed to have a homestead at Geelong. I have seen a great deal of Peter, and have asked many of the other attendants who know him, and they all say he should be let out. His relatives, however, sent him here ; and doubtless he is a little weak-minded, but his present state is sane enough, and his only desire to be let out and go to Geelong. All day Peter asks the attendants when he will be allowed to go out ; they, *pour amuser*, tell him to run and ask the doctor when he comes round. Consequently Peter rushes frantically after Dr. Robertson, whom he must regard as his chief gaoler, and the medical officers get the idea that he is a dangerous lunatic. I thoroughly believe that it is the sanest men who think most of escaping, not that there is much chance of any getting over the 15ft. wall. In one corner, however, the mortar has been picked away between several of the stones, and two or three pieces of strong stick, or a knife or spoon stuck into these, might enable an active man to mount the wall and escape. Perhaps it was by these means, although it is not thoroughly known, that M'M——, the

patient who gave himself up at the police station the other day, escaped. He is one of the sanest men, although suffering from delusions, and was in one of the convalescent wards. The attendants who were sent in pursuit had little chance of capturing him, and when they returned in the middle of the night, were astonished to find he had been brought back by the police hours before. M'M—— threatened to escape again, and he has been carefully watched since. But the majority of patients in the yard seem to think little of the outside world, or even of what is going on directly around them. Each one thinks only of himself, and cares only for the particular yards of ground he has selected to walk, sit, lie, or stand upon. In many respects they are like animals, and particularly in this partiality for one location. Some of them will talk with the attendants, and walk up and down smoking with them; but as a rule each man is occupied with his own thoughts, and is entirely self-concentrated. This has one good effect, as it prevents any combination for purposes of *emule* or escape; indeed I do not think any two at present in the asylum would combine for any purpose, as, when not entirely occupied with their own ideas, they are suspicious of their companions. Only once have they done anything in concert, and that was when first the red badges, which the attendants now wear round their arms, were introduced. The patients saw that this implied some distinction and a possession of power, and in a week everyone in the yard had a red badge made by tearing the lining of their coats. This imitation caused the capture of two who escaped and were tracked and identified by these badges.

But of the really insane it may be said that they are the denizens of very different worlds—each a *terra incognita* of

cloud and darkness. They share with each other and with us the brute passions and instincts, but beyond that we know nothing. We cannot solve their thoughts—that lies beyond us. Their bodies are here ; but their souls, where? A change has passed over them which science itself fails satisfactorily to explain. They are living and yet dead. Confined here as in a prison—torn away from their homes and their friends, and deprived of all rights of citizenship ; and yet they may not be wholly unhappy. The writer of a quaint old book on the “Theory of Compensations” says, “Soe tenderly kind and gracious is Nature, our mother, that she seldom or never puts upon us grievance without making us some amends, which, if not a full and perfect equivalent, is yet a great solace and salve to the sore.” Let us hope that kindly nature grants to these poor afflicted ones some pleasure and solace in their delusions, and be glad that their diseased minds are spared much suffering by their oblivion of what goes on around them.

In the “front yard” the scene is very different. Only the convalescent, and better class of patients, are allowed in here. It is much smaller than the other yard, and is bounded on two sides by the buildings, and on the others by the ha-ha. The view is more confined than at the back, but the wooded heights of Studley-park, and the city of Melbourne stretching out like a panorama, the public buildings standing forth bold and clear against the sky, afford sufficient objects of interest. The inmates of this yard—nearly 100 in number—appear to have a greater curiosity as to what goes on in the outer world, and the sight of vehicles and visitors coming and going to and from the asylum appears to do them good. In the centre of the yard there is a round house, which is made interesting by containing three parrots in cages, which are carefully tended by

the patients. These birds are not close prisoners, as the doors of their cages are often left open, and they can fly about where they will. But they are cunning and wise in their generation, and fully recognize that it is better to be caged, and waited upon and petted by unfeathered bipeds, than to roam at liberty in the bush, painfully seeking their daily bread, and exposed to the attacks of snakes, hawks, and larrikins. So, should a hawk appear in the air, or a laughing-jackass perch on the tower, swiftly the parrots fly to their cages, screeching out their fear of an attack, and feeling their only safety in their prisons.

None of the patients here are subject to any form of mechanical restraint, and being better and more carefully dressed than those in the side yard, there is little to show that they are insane. Some play at draughts or cards, seated under the roundhouse, others read newspapers of various dates. Some walk around the paths, or collect in little groups, conversing together. This interchanging of ideas and sociable feeling is a sign of convalescence, or of the abatement of monomania. There are certainly many here who are perfectly sane and coherent on most subjects, or on nearly all, but have extraordinary delusions on one or two. It is a question, which I suppose has been often debated, as to whether such cases should be confined in a lunatic asylum—in fact, as to when a delusion becomes insanity. I don't see very well how this is to be settled, except on the ground of public safety. Those who believe that they have been defrauded of money—a very general faith here—or that they are being persecuted, or denied their rank, may be guilty of violence in support of such delusions. But there are many whose disordered ideas fix themselves on a harmless belief. Have we

not all of us met such cases in society?—people who are perfectly sane, and able to perform their duties to themselves and their neighbours, but who on one point are “slightly cracked.” History, too, teaches us that some of the greatest and most learned have been so afflicted. Goethe, Pascal, Luther, and Dr. Johnson all had extraordinary delusions, and yet their contemporaries did not consider them mad. The visions of Swedenborg and of Blake the artist-poet, were certainly, to us who do not believe in spiritualism, those of madmen, and yet they were not immediately hurtful to society. But John Stuart Mill points out the danger which, in the present day, even the highest and wealthiest incur if they indulge too much in any pet eccentricities ; they are in peril of a commission *de lunatico* and of having their property taken from them and given to their relatives. He says :—“There is something both contemptible and frightful in the sort of evidence on which, of late years, any person can be declared judicially unfit for the management of his affairs ; and after his death the disposal of his property can be set aside, if there is enough of it to pay the expenses of litigation—which are charged on the property itself. All the minute details of his daily life are pried into, and whatever is found which, seen through the medium of the perceiving and describing faculties of the lowest of the low, bears an appearance unlike absolute commonplace, is laid before the jury as evidences of insanity, and often with success ; the jurors being little, if at all, less vulgar and ignorant than the witnesses, while the judges, with that extraordinary want of knowledge of human nature and life which continually astonishes us in English lawyers, often help to mislead them. So far from setting any value on individuality—so far from respecting the right of each individual to act, in

things indifferent, as seems good to his own judgment and inclinations—judges and juries cannot even conceive that a person in a state of sanity can desire such freedom.”

So, according to the present law and the present system, a man suffering from a belief that he is William Shakspeare, or that he sees heaven or hell and the spirits thereof, although perfectly sane in every other respect, rational in “things indifferent,” may be committed to Kew Asylum by his friends, and remain there a burden to the Government. As Dr. Robertson says, it is “so much easier to get in than to get out.” Some of the patients walking about this front yard seem to me of this class, and there are many with whom I have had long conversations, and not having struck on their particular hallucination, appeared to me very sane indeed, although, of course, I knew that they must be “mad” on some point. The complete change which takes place in the manners and habits, and in the expression of the features of the maniac, makes them appear all of one class. The gentleman and scholar, in extreme cases, cannot be detected from the criminal lunatic. But here, in the front yard, you can perceive the difference in social rank and education. There are many here who are occasionally let out on *parole*, and who walk about the paddock, or go into the town for a day. One man, who curses and swears with great humour, generally abuses his *parole* by getting drunk. There is another extraordinary case here, a man who requested his wife to send him to the asylum, as he felt an irresistible desire to kill her and his children. He has been out once or twice, but always requests to be sent back. There is a boy, a case of what the doctors know as “moral insanity,” but what to ordinary mortals appears only natural “cussedness.” He is the son of respectable tradespeople, and although not twenty, has had

several attacks of *delirium tremens*, and to keep him quiet he is sent here. Several times he has been taken back home ; but, as he breaks out, and is considered to disgrace his family, they, with the aid of their doctor, return him to the asylum. The consequence of this treatment is that he, knowing he is sane, is nursing a deadly hatred against his parents for so keeping him confined, and morally his reformation is not progressing.

Still, in this yard you are occasionally reminded that you are in a lunatic asylum. A man may break out cursing, or another, calling on the Almighty to aid him, will fight with an invisible Apollyon. Two young idiot boys running a race, with a painful lack of muscular power and command over their limbs, make a painful sight. These boys are taken care of by an old man, who labours under the delusion that he is their father. There are fifteen idiot children in the asylum, and their presence is a great evil, as they are liable to be corrupted by their seniors. Neither here nor at Yarra Bend is there any attempt at educating them ; and this I believe to be a great mistake, as by patience these boys could be taught something, and their minds opened to a certain extent. Indeed, one of the lads seemed brighter than many a dull boy I have seen in English public schools. If, too, the adults were given a certain amount of tuition, it would have a good effect ; and if a poor man learnt to write whilst he was mad, it would be no disadvantage to him when he became sane. Here, as in the side-yard, there are some who, all day long, stand exactly in the same place, insensible to heat and cold. "Where there's no sense there's no feeling," said an attendant to me ; but still they suffer in their health from the inclemency of the weather, although they are unconscious of it. Yard duty in fine weather is not very distressing. In the front you can play euchre or draughts with the patients,

smoking all the time. Of course, you look particularly active about the hour the superintendent and medical officers make their morning inspection. There is seldom any disturbance amongst the patients in the front-yard. But at the side it is different. There is a certain number of dangerous patients who always require watching, and in cold weather it is anything but pleasant to be eight hours on guard here. Occasionally they get up a match of football, which is a capital thing to amuse and keep the patients exercising ; but the supply of balls is limited. Handball is not sufficiently popular, being too monotonous. A fight takes place now and then between the patients, when the attendants have to separate them, and often draw upon their heads the united wrath of the respective combatants. I got hurt in that way. One morning I happened to be for a short time alone in the side-yard, on guard over two hundred patients. A noise of combat arose, and, rushing to the place, I found two patients fighting after the manner of wild beasts and women, scratching and clawing each other's hair and beards, and rolling over and over on the ground, uttering discordant cries. They were both big, heavy men, and, in stooping and struggling to part them I got "a wrench"—a sort of thing in which one's ribs, muscles, and general internal machinery, get doubled up in a corner. I did not feel this so much at first, but during the night could hardly sleep, and next day went on the sick list. Dr. Watkins ordered me to lie in bed, which, beyond a reasonable hour—say noon—I detest. Dr. Molloy wanted to bandage me up with strips of plaster, *à la* mummy. I compounded by applying some liniment, and keeping off duty for a day. To give the patients their due, the men did not attempt to strike me ; and another—a man out of my ward—ran to my assistance when he saw the struggle ; and although, for some time, I

felt a painful sensation when I stirred quickly, still it was all in the bond, and part of my duty to get any amount of kicks and injuries for £1 a week. Taking into consideration that this is a lunatic asylum, the patients, on the whole, are wonderfully docile. They soon get to know the attendants, and, recognizing by instinct their authority, they obey them. Very few are confined in the wards, and only one man is considered so dangerous as to be placed in a small yard by himself. There is sometimes a little trouble in getting the men in to their meals, but not half so much as might be expected. The attendants are often needlessly rough in shepherding their flocks, and disturbances may arise caused through unnecessary interference with the liberty of the lunatic subject.

The patient's mess room, as it is commonly called, is a fine hall, with accommodation for at least 500. Over the offices and front entrance to the asylum are the residences of the superintendent and Dr. Watkins, the senior medical officer. At the rear of these are two small yards, with high fences of galvanized iron; and at the back, running at right angles with the front of the asylum, and isolated from any other part of the building, is the dining-hall. It divides the male and female divisions, and acts as the side to two spacious courts. That on the male side has been grassed down, and made into a fine bowling green. The ground in the female division is at present in a primitive state of clay and sand, but is being laid out as a garden, and some day or other will bloom with flowers and shrubs. Round the sides of the wards and the dining-hall, in both these courts, there are stone pavements, covered by a verandah, so that you can pass from any part of the asylum to another under shelter. The meals in the patients' mess-room are served at eight, one, and five o'clock. Half-an-hour before

each the bell rings to prepare the inmates, and to summon those attendants who assist in the hall. The second breakfast bell being rung, the doors of the different wards are opened, and all the patients, with the exception of the sick and infirm in the hospital ward, a few in some of the others, and recently-admitted or refractory cases, are marched down to the dining-hall. Through custom they all know the way, and those who are too insane to find the road or recognize the occasion, are carried along by the stream, or assisted by a gentle (or rough) push from the attendants, who are on guard at the bottom of all the stairs and around the court at the various outlets. The only one of any consequence, however, is the passage towards the offices, all the doors this way being open, and once pass this, a lunatic might have a race for liberty across the paddock. There is little fear of this, however, as at mealtimes this is always jealously guarded. Inside the messroom the long deal tables are furnished with tin pannikins full of tea, the bread and butter being served out afterwards. The patients crowd and crush in, many of them by reason or instinct daily taking about the same place. But others are pushed in anywhere, and have to sit where they can. There is a small side table where a few epileptic patients, who are well enough to be about, are supplied with "sop" and mince. The patients all in, the attendants, generally about twenty-five to thirty being present, serve out from baskets the allowance of bread and butter to each man, and afterwards they walk up and down between the tables keeping order, or supplying extra tea. All the provisions are handed into the hall through the open windows communicating with the kitchen, which is a continuation of the building. Nearly 400 patients mess together, and the sight is not a pleasing one. Rule 26 says:—"The

meals must not be hurried over, and the patients must be taught to sit down in an orderly manner, without their hats. They must not be allowed to eat their meat with their fingers ; but if they are unfit, from weakness or violence, or are unwilling to use knives and forks, the meat must be cut up, and the patients supplied with spoons, and, when necessary, must be carefully fed." But with such a number of patients in every stage of insanity, it is not such an easy matter to make them feed properly. There are many who tear their food like wild beasts, and make continual raids on the portions of their neighbours. If detected, they are soon stopped, but occasionally slight disturbances arise and fights take place at dinner-time, potatoes forming a handy missile.

After breakfast is over, the patients are all marched to the exercising yards, or those who work to the scenes of their employment. The bell, which is rung at half-past twelve, summons an attendant from each ward to carve the meat in the kitchen. Armed with a carving knife and fork, each man seizes a joint from the tins in which they are brought from the ovens or copper. The whole object is to cut every scrap of meat off the bones, and how it is cut matters not. A good joint, which may have been passably cooked, becomes to a civilized man a hideous mass after an attendant's carving. And here let me notice, that as a whole the supply of food to the inmates is ample and good, but the cooking is often very bad, and joints are sent to be cut up for the mess which are only fit to be boiled down for soup. I only once assisted in carving ; that was on a Sunday, when there is roast meat. The joints had been divided without any form or reference to the customary mode of cutting them. It was my misfortune to get hold of several portions, the like of which I had never seen on any table in the

world. Compounds of bone and hard gristle, they defied my knowledge of anatomy, and I began to think that animals in Australia developed parts unknown in slaughtered carcasses elsewhere. My arm ached in cutting up what the contractor and cook had passed as meat, and I am sorry for those patients who had to attempt to eat it. The distribution of the food seems to me hardly satisfactory. As the meat is cut up some attendants fork a portion on to an iron plate, others add some potatoes, and it is passed through the window into the dining-room. Thus a poor old patient may get a plateful of gristle, and others fare comparatively well. The head attendant is present at all the meals, and the superintendent generally at dinner time and often at tea. Until we have seen him safe out of the building, driving to town, we never know when to be sure of Dr. Robertson, and generally we feel aggrieved at his habit of "dropping in promiscuous." Of course, when he is present we walk around pretty smart, and keep the patients in good order. At other times we are not so active. One Sunday, both the superintendent and the head attendant being absent, we had some fun at the expense of the next in charge, a worthy and good attendant (as far as my knowledge went of his character). Clustered round the entrance-door, we carefully ignored all his cries, and those of the captain of the mess-room, to "come and hand out this bread." Only one man was at that work, and the patients were sitting staring at the bare tables waiting for food. It was a capital joke to some, no doubt, but my sense of humour was deficient to the extent that I felt for the poor patients, and so—most unusual thing for me to do—I went to the buttery, and handed round and distributed three baskets of bread and butter. One or two more coming in, we managed at last to get the tea through.

I mention this merely as an instance of the little jokes we occasionally played, for, as a rule, I was studiously deaf to all cries which demanded my assistance in any work, preferring to walk around and view things generally, saluting the superintendent *à la militaire* to show my amenity to discipline, and getting near the door towards the end for an early start to my own meals.

Tea is served in the same manner as breakfast, with the addition during the proper season of a plentiful supply of salad. After tea the patients are all marched to their wards for the night and counted in. Very often some will stray into the wrong ward, and attendants have to go round the building looking out for the lost sheep. Owing to the efficient guard kept between the yards, messroom, and wards, it is seldom that a patient can get to any other part of the building. One night, however, we missed a man from B 1 ward, and searched high and low without finding him. It was imagined that he had escaped, and was so reported to the superintendent; but in the morning the poor fellow was discovered crouched up amongst some dirty clothes in a closet in another ward into which he had crept, and been locked in all night. At one end of the dining hall is a small room originally used as a library, and containing some book-cases full of volumes in all stages of dilapidation. This is now used as a "convalescent mess-room," and has accommodation for twenty patients, who are selected according to their station and behaviour. An attendant is always present here during meals, though his post is a sinecure; still it is a precautionary measure. I was on duty here several days. The service is a little better than in the large mess-room, and at dinner time the convalescents are each allowed a small portion of bread and cheese. This is con-

sidered a special delicacy in the asylum, and, as a rule, is only given to those men who work outside or in the wards. The system of classification at meals, I think, is highly desirable. Mess-rooms separate from the wards may be a great advantage, but when hundreds are crowded together, as in the large dining hall, I think the effect is anything but salutary. Hustled in and out like sheep it is really surprising that there is so little disturbance, and to see 300 or 400 lunatics dining together is to a stranger an extraordinary sight. Examine this system closely, however, and you will see its disadvantages. Out of the large number of inmates who are approaching convalescence, or who have lucid intervals, but twenty mess separately. To a man of any education or refinement (and there are many such in Kew), or even to those who have been accustomed to the comforts of a modest home, the scenes in the messroom must be very repugnant. Seated next to a dirty idiot in a canvas frock, or to a violent Chinaman who feeds like a wild beast, a convalescent of formerly good breeding can have little relish for his meals. In many cases certainly a complete change takes place in the habits of lunatics, and their senses become quite perverted. Men of refined tastes and breeding may become obscene, and as a beast, bestial. But these are extreme cases, and often the former habits and manners of the lunatic are unchanged, and it is certain that as he advances towards recovery they will resume their full sway. Taking this view, the herding of the patients together at meals in one large room seems to me a great mistake, and in many cases will tend to retard recovery. Instead of one messroom, I think half a dozen, and a careful classification of the occupants, would be desirable.

The patients' meals being over, the attendants rush to their

own messroom. This is a small detached building at the end of the bowling-green, and opposite the kitchen door. It is not half large enough, is very dirty, and altogether its condition is a disgrace to the institution. There are two messes for the attendants—breakfast being at half-past eight and nine, dinner at half-past one and two, and tea at half-past five and six. The bill of fare comprises—bread, butter, cheese, coffee, and tea, for breakfast; at dinner, roast or boiled meat and potatoes; tea the same as breakfast. At dinner-time especially there is a great rush for the first mess, and the men crowd round the door like a lot of hounds in a kennel. There is a competition for seats, and a struggle for the potatoes. The meat is sometimes carved by one man at each table, but often it is a case of help yourself, and famine take the hindmost. The dirty tablecloth, the partly-washed plates, the badly cooked meat, and the fight for one's food, made a series of prandial experiences the roughest I ever endured. A six-penny restaurant is an abode of luxury compared to the attendants' messroom at Kew. The food is no better than what the patients get, and often is not so well cooked. Joints will be sent in burnt up, or quite raw, and several times I have seen men unable to make a meal. The "chief cook and baker" is, of course, an important personage, and I suppose if he was fined, would "ask for a board." Oh! how I longed for the power of Pharaoh, who decidedly was justified in the execution of *his* baker if he was half such a spoiler of meats as ours at Kew. At breakfast and tea-time there is always a crowd round the small fireplace making toast, the only luxury we can get, but on Saturday morning there is a plentiful supply of cold meat. This, happily for us heretics, arises through the number of true

believers who fast on the Friday. May it ever be so. In the messroom the attendants are brought together, and their individual characteristics are strongly displayed. Out of the fifty attendants in the asylum only four, I believe, are English, the rest are sons of the sod, from north or south—Orangemen or R.C.'s. My leanings were rather towards the latter, as my ward comrades were principally of that faith. I believe that one pious and prominent member of the St. Patrick's Society had hopes of my conversion. It was pleasing to find here so many of "the boys," and to my mind it is only another proof of the superiority of the Irish race—especially in office-holding. In the city of New York, under Tammany, there was at one time only one native American holding office of any kind ; and in Victoria, looking at our police, gaols, asylums, and Parliament, what should we do without the Irish element? The whole social and political system of Victoria would surely burst up if these banished sons of Erin should refuse to serve the country. Let us hope that they will still continue to sacrifice themselves—for sufficient considerations. Where two or three Irishmen are gathered together there is sure to be a row, especially when they are of different religions, and so occasionally we had some lively times in the messroom. There was a good deal of bad language and horse-play, potatoes and bread thrown about, and sometimes a danger of a more serious quarrel. In the messroom we are all equal, and the newly-appointed attendant at £1 a week can vent his wrongs (of which I shall speak hereafter) on his senior who has £120 a year. One of these juniors, who was temporarily captain of the mess, was particularly forward in asserting himself, and it was a general surprise that he did not get a thrashing. There was no harm in him, though—only a superabundance of

youthful spirit. The permanent captain of the mess is an obliging little fellow, and does what he can, considering the disadvantages under which he labours. He is assisted by two patients, who wash up the plates, &c. One of these is a Belgian Jew named Moses; another a German, called Kaiser. The latter I subsidized to make my toast, repaying him by tales of the sea and shipping. Both these men were very curious as to what went on in the outer world.

The attendants at Kew have really a good solid grievance in the condition of their mess-room. In size, cleanliness, and general convenience, it is equally disgraceful. Outward conditions have so much to do with a man's conduct, that it is not surprising that this place, and the necessary rough way of feeding therein, develop a spirit of rowdiness in the most exuberant. The only wonder to me is, that there were not more serious disturbances. To enable a man to respect himself and respect others, he should be housed and fed in a decent manner; and, looking at the rough way in which the attendants are obliged to take their own meals, it is a natural sequence that they should be little careful as to the serving of the patients at their mess.

After a week's duty in the hospital, I was, to my great relief, transferred to B 1 ward. This is immediately over B, and is exactly the same in size and internal arrangements, sharing also the fame of being the worst in the asylum. The number of helpless patients in the hospital, and the constant watching and attention which they require, and should have, and the disgusting duties which have to be superintended, if not performed, make it perhaps the most disagreeable. But in B 1, if there are not helpless and epileptics, every other class of patients is represented. We had refractory, dirty, chronic,

idiotic—every grade of insanity up to apparent convalescence. Instead of sixty patients, as in the hospital, there were over ninety in B 1; and if in the former the dormitories appeared far too crowded, it was far worse in the latter: what should have been a day-room being turned into a dormitory. The corridor is the only place for patients to stop in during rough weather, and the hours between tea and bed time. As may be imagined, it is considerably crowded; in winter it is bad enough, and in summer must be frightful. Over the door of each room is painted the number of cubic feet which it contains, so that the superintendent and medical officers can tell at a glance the maximum number of patients to be placed therein, according to the minimum allowance of cubic feet of air for each patient—500, I believe. But granting that, owing to the height of the rooms, there is apparently sufficient space for the ninety odd patients in this ward, still in the corridor and dormitories there is a great lack of superficial space, which is not counter-balanced by the extra height. I have been perusing with great interest some admirable articles on the lunatic asylums of America and England, which have been appearing in the *Lancet* during the last few months. “The *Lancet* Commission” on metropolitan district asylums states of the buildings at Hampstead:—“The cubic capacity of the wards is sufficient, but the value of this fact is much reduced by the crowding of beds. As is well known, under such circumstances the measurement of cubic space counts for nothing. The lower strata of the atmosphere in an apartment are those chiefly concerned in the supply of respirable air to sleepers. If some fifty or seventy patients are discharging carbonized air from their lungs at intervals of little more than three feet on the same level, and breathing back the atmosphere thus vitiated,

the strata of pure air above them are only of secondary importance." This might have been written of some of the wards at Kew, and it is really surprising that the overcrowding has not been followed by worse results. But owing to the healthy situation, the enforced cleanliness of the wards and patients, the good quality of the food, and liberal allowance of "medical comforts" to the sick or infirm, the present state of things is chiefly prejudicial to the minds of the patients. With ninety crowded in a ward, as in B 1, the attendants, with the best intentions, can pay little heed to Rule 17, which says—"They must observe the patients carefully, so as to be able to report to the medical officer the slightest symptoms of illness or indication of amendment; they must also observe the state of their appetite, the habits of each patient, their mental condition, and any delusions they may entertain." In fact, owing to this overcrowding, curative treatment must be entirely in abeyance; and if a patient placed in a ward crowded like B 1 gets better, it is certainly not in consequence of any such treatment.

To take care of these ninety patients there were nominally seven attendants; but as two of these were always working outside, or in charge of patients so working during the daytime, the real working number was only five. The routine of work here was the same as in B ward—rousing the patients, washing them, turning out the cells, brushing up the dirt, and setting men to scrub the floors, filled up the time till breakfast. Some few men had that meal served to them in the ward, but the rest went to the mess-room, and afterwards, unless in rough weather, to the yard or to their work. A certain number, however, were kept in the ward until they had scrubbed the floors of all the dormitories, which generally took until very near inspection

time ; before which they would be sent to the yard, being each presented with a small piece of tobacco, as a reward for their labour. Those who remained in all day were a few patients suffering from ophthalmia, one or two infirm men, and a blind dwarf, who, hour after hour, kept on an incessant chatter of quaint English country sayings and stories, or sang old ballads for his own amusement. Bodily and mentally he was oblivious of aught around him, and was happy. There were seldom more than two or three attendants in this ward during the day, as the others might be on yard-duty, or one on his weekly "day off." But, after inspection was over, there was nothing to do but read and smoke, and long for mealtimes. Every little thing which required attention during the day might safely be left to two patients, who decidedly took a greater interest in their duties than did the attendants, myself included. One of these was a Norwegian—another, an Englishman of education. With Hamlet, they might have said, "We are only mad nor'-nor' west, when the wind is southerly we can tell a hawk from a hernshaw ;" and the wind was generally southerly with them. The Scandinavian patronized me as a "new chum." Every hour he would come to me—"My good gentlemen, lend me the key," explaining that such-and-such a thing ought to be done, and all the keys were given him without scruple. He was a most polite, excellent man, and I felt ashamed to think that he, a patient, was a much better attendant than myself. What brought him there no one exactly knew. I suppose he had some delusions, and his work being done he would retire to some quiet corner and talk Norse by the hour. The other man was even quieter ; he seemed suffering from a chronic melancholy, but I was told had been apparently all right for a long time, with the exception that he did not know who he was. Certainly, forgetting one's

identity is enough to worry a man. This one evidently brooded long on this subject. "Since I have been in here I have forgotten all about my affairs, and I can't make it out," said he to me once. "I might be a king, and if they come to shutting crowned heads up in lunatic asylums—" I admitted that it would be rather hard on the crowned heads, and deplored the growing democracy of the age. "If I was a crowned head I would knight you—just lay a sword on you, you know!" "Thanks, old fellow," I replied; "but in the meantime have you any objection to make up my fire?" He had not, for he knew I was good for any amount of tobacco. He had a sense of humour, too, and must have belonged to the Whig party in his early days; for, finding a sketch of the Prime Minister of England in an old *Punch*, he wrote underneath it, "Anser," and said to me, "It is reported that geese once saved the Capitol, but he will never save England." Long letters in Greek, also, would this patient write, addressed to half the peerage. I was really sorry for him, and ashamed that I had to order a man of education to perform menial offices; but he had been so long at that work, and appreciating doubtless the comparative liberty it afforded him, he was always willing and anxious to perform any "chores."

After tea this ward was very crowded, and the time passed slowly until eight o'clock. Some illustrated papers and books were handed out by the ward attendant, with a draught-board and some cards. A few patients read or played, others walked up and down the corridor, or crept into a corner or a dormitory out of the way. The attendants generally had a game of cards, three perhaps playing with one patient, it being allowed to play with and amuse the patients. In this ward I met many of my old friends of the yard. We had all sorts and

conditions here, from "paying patients," men in good business positions, to pauper Chinamen. One little Frenchman interested me most. His dapper little figure was disguised in hideous moleskins ; but oblivious of this, he swaggered about with as great a nonchalance as if on the *Boulevard des Italiens*. He was quite self-concentrated, and hardly ever spoke to anyone, all the time keeping up a low muttering, communing with himself. I was surprised when one day he came to me and said, "Etes-vous un francmaçon?" On replying in the affirmative, he tried to prove me, but his shattered wits could not collect any but fragments of the mysteries. Afterwards he broke out into the old student song—

" Mon père est à Paris,
Ma mère est en Versailles ;
Et moi —"

and was enchanted when I filled up the couplet, and joined in the chorus. When, after one of my visits to town, I brought him some cigarette paper and cut tobacco, I completely won his heart. In spite of its bad repute, I found B 1 a great improvement on the hospital ward. The patients did not require such continual watching, and the attendants could amuse themselves more. Now and then a noisy case might break out, but, as a rule, few were troublesome ; and, consequently, there was considerably less "clouting" than down below. The attendants talked good-naturedly with the patients, and generally meant, perhaps, to treat them kindly ; although I question if telling a man that his wife was about getting a divorce for the purpose of being married to you, or that his daughters had "gone on the town," was likely to tend to his recovery. But then one must amuse oneself, and such refined

jokes have always been popular amongst the lowest class in Great Britain. Owing to the number of patients, there was considerable confusion in undressing at night, and stowing away the clothes around the corridor ; and the next morning there was often a dispute as to the ownership of certain garments. After all were locked in the cells and dormitories, there would, for hours, be a continual talking—some discussing politics, others their wrongs ; and the blind dwarf would sing nearly all through the night, seemingly with no desire to sleep.

Friday is the bathing day at Kew, and at different hours the patients in the several wards have to undergo the dreaded ordeal of the bath, and a change of clothing. In the hospital ward it is rather hard work for the attendants ; but in the other wards, taking B1 as a sample, one has only to stand over and bully the patients. I must certainly bear witness that I did not see any patient have his head held under the water to keep him quiet, a practice which at the late inquiry was said to be prevalent on the female side of the asylum. The rules say—“Not more than three patients are to be bathed in the same water, and when practicable not more than one.” But this was certainly not carried out. I should imagine twelve to be nearer the mark. The bathrooms are totally inadequate to the requirements of the establishment, and it is evident that, when there is only one bath for ninety people, a good deal of confusion must take place. There was decidedly not a sufficient supply of towels—a want not remedied by the addition of dirty sheets out of the closet for patients to dry themselves with. With that dislike for water so strong in our race, many of the patients had a great dread of the bath, and it was necessary to force them to undress. “Don’t take my things off,” a man would cry, whimpering like a child. But in spite of the rather

rough-and-ready way in which bathing is conducted here, still there can be no doubt that it, with the accompaniment of clean clothes, is a great help in maintaining the health of the patients. When stripped for the bath, one had a chance of examining their physique. Much muscular development was hardly to be expected, but their bodies seemed all in good condition and well nourished—far better, I imagine, than the average outside. Many bruises were to be seen, results of frays with each other, or struggles with the attendants—or often caused, perhaps, by the patient's own carelessness ; but the average was not as much as could be shown by members of our football clubs after a grand match. An outsider, who had been filled with reports of the horrors of lunatic asylums, would, when he saw a lunatic with bruised shins, &c., say, "Poor fellow, kicked by a brutal attendant !" but one who has been amongst them recognizes at once that a lunatic is both mentally and bodily careless of any slight injury, and that many of these bruises have probably been self-caused.

During my three weeks in Kew I was permanently stationed in the hospital and B 1 wards, but on several occasions I did duty in C, C 1, and D, besides many times visiting the other five wards. C 1 is a convalescent ward, and a stranger first introduced there would not recognize the howling madhouse his imagination had, doubtless, painted. There being fewer patients than in the other wards, the day-room is appropriated to its proper use. Gathered round the fire, reading or smoking, were a number of patients, to all outward appearance, as sane as I was. An attendant, I soon found, had not much to do in these convalescent wards ; and I could hardly hope that, if not useful, I was ornamental. There was a fair supply of books and illustrated papers, with draught boards and cards

for the amusement of the patients. On the rough walls a print or two was hung, and there was a general attempt to make the place look comfortable. Everyone there was quiet and orderly, and the conversation was perfectly coherent. The books supplied were good novels and magazines. George Eliot, Dickens, Thackeray, and Trollope were the favourites. I saw one man with tears in his eyes, and curious, I asked to see what he was reading. It was Ouida's beautiful idyll, *A Dog of Flanders*. May Mdlle. de la Ramée's numerous literary sins be forgiven her for the sake of that tale, and the emotions it aroused in a patient at Kew. There I had the pleasure of having a pen-and-ink portrait taken by a talented young artist, who bears one of the most celebrated names in contemporary English art, and who I hope will yet find fame and fortune in the colonies. There one of the attendants daily painfully laboured at the piccolo, trying to play selections from "La Fille de Madame Angôt." He was an old soldier, one of two in the asylum, who both seemed to be as efficient and kind to the patients as any. C ward, underneath the other, has the same class of patients, and, from the appearance of both, a stranger, although the dreary wards and dormitories would suggest the hospital, certainly would not think he was in a lunatic asylum. The attendants in charge of these wards are both good men, who rank next to the head warder, and there—as everywhere in the asylum where the patients were not troublesome—the treatment was kind. In fact, in these wards it would not do to ill-treat any patient, as they are all sane enough to lay their case before the superintendent, who is particularly careful in investigating any case of violence or ill-treatment. D is the receiving ward, where patients are kept for some days or weeks, and dosed with

purgatives and sedatives whilst the medical officers are studying their cases, when, according to their degree of insanity, they are classified and draughted into the other wards. Many go from D into one of the C wards as convalescents. In this ward the patients are kept in single rooms, some padded to prevent injury to the occupants during a paroxysm. Camisoles and gloves have often to be used here. There is a good day-room, with draughts and books, and a bagatelle table to amuse the patients. Most of them take their meals in the day-room, and they appear, under the mild restraint of the senior attendant there, far happier and more comfortable than if crowded into the common mess-room. In this ward are kept some of the idiot boys before mentioned, beds being made up for them in the corridor. Each patient in D doubtless requires much more individual attention, but with only thirty patients and plenty of day-room, everything worked far more smoothly than in B 1, with ninety patients crowding each other out of breathing space. D 1, F, and F 1, are ordinary wards, with nothing particular to distinguish them. The patients are of a mixed grade, as in B 1. G and G 1 are known among the attendants as the "refractory" wards, although Dr. Robertson objects to that designation, and will not allow it to be used in his presence. I suppose he wisely has the idea that the patients in these wards are likely to understand that they are considered the worst cases in the asylum, and to take advantage of such a designation by increased violence of conduct. In these wards you see most of the patients who are under restraint in camisoles, gloves, or the padded-room, and at night they are mostly confined in single cells.

At this point I may perhaps usefully draw attention to the,

to my mind, present necessity of, in special cases, a certain amount of gentle mechanical restraint. For many years all the English asylums have claimed to be absolutely conducted on the non-restraint system, of which Dr. Conolly may proudly boast to be the originator. But, in entirely discarding the camisole, they may, in certain cases, have adopted measures of control far more hurtful to the patient. In France and the United States restraint by means of the camisole, muffs, and straps on chairs and beds, is acknowledged to be part of the treatment of the insane. American physicians say, "Restraint in some form or other must be employed—whether by bricks and mortar, manual tension, or fastenings on the person, or 'chemical restraint.' Whichever be adopted, physical and not moral means are resorted to. To declare any one of these to be wrong, and say it shall never be made use of, is uncalled for and unwise, although it should only be resorted to after much consideration." I quote from an article on the "Insane in the United States," by Dr. Tuke, published in the *Journal of Mental Science* of last April. This vexed question is in England receiving renewed attention, through the publication in the *Lancet*, during the last few months, of two series of articles on asylum treatment, one by the *Lancet* commission, and the other by Dr. Bucknill, commissioner of Chancery lunatics, on American Asylums. Dr. Bucknill, has been making a tour through the United States, and is very angry with American physicians because they will not adopt the absolute non-restraint principle, although he is forced to admit that, in the hospitals he visited, he saw very little restraint, and in some none. Otherwise his remarks are generally flattering to the American institutions. In the *Lancet* of the 27th May there appears an excellent letter from Dr. Ray, of Philadelphia, on this question.

He says—"It being admitted that some form of restraint is necessary, personal or mechanical, their respective merits must be determined solely by the results. What I want to know is, how far non-restraint is chargeable with the casualties that happen, more or less, in every hospital—the suicides, homicides, broken ribs, black eyes, bruised faces. To determine this point exactly is beyond our power ; therefore it must be left to every superintendent to reach as near it as he can by impartial observation. Here it has happened that every one of them has arrived at the conclusion that, in a small number of cases, the ultimate welfare of the patient is promoted by the judicious use of restraint. It seems a more efficient and less irritating mode than the hands and eyes of attendants." In a following number of the *Lancet*, Dr. Bodington declares that, on this question, the Americans and French have the best of the argument, and points out that "mechanical coercion is valuable as a remedial measure in the treatment of the insane." Dr. Wilkes, one of the commissioners of lunacy, said, at the time this question was being greatly argued in England—"With every disposition to advocate the disuse of restraint to the utmost extent, I am compelled to admit that the result of my experience leads me to the conclusion that cases may occur in which its temporary employment may be both necessary and justifiable." Dr. Forbes Winslow, in his report to the commissioners, says—"Patients have often expressed a wish to be placed under mechanical restraint, should I, in my judgment, believe that they would, when much excited, commit overt acts of violence, and be dangerous to themselves and others. Mechanical restraint may, for a short period, be applied, not only without detriment, but with positive advantage as a curative process." Strangely, a similar case of a patient asking to be put under restraint came

under my notice. I was present in one of the female exercising yards when Dr. Robertson asked a good and intelligent-looking young girl, who was confined in a camisole, "What are you doing with that on this afternoon? I ordered it to be taken off you this morning," and he called the attendant to release the girl. "Yes, doctor, I'm much obliged to you, but I'd rather keep it on. I asked them to put it on me again. You see I keep quiet, and I've got some peace now. When I've got it off, that cat Mrs. — never lets me alone, says I do wrong, and won't keep her hands off me." The little feminine abuse of the attendant only made this speech more sensible; and this was a clear case in which the patient felt the mechanical restraint of the camisole less aggravating than the continual personal interference and coercion of an attendant, and recognized clearly that, so clothed, she was kept out of mischief, and free from such interference.

From a month's experience as an attendant I have arrived at the conclusion (by, I presume, the same process of mind as the authorities I have quoted, although starting from a different point of view) that the mechanical restraint of the camisole is far better for the patient than the perpetual restraint of an attendant's eyes and hands, and the continual exercise of manual coercion. The theory of non-restraint is, that this is to be gentle; but how is its quantity or quality to be depended upon? I have shown how troublesome patients are treated at Kew; how would a man fare who had continually to be watched and restrained by one of the attendants there? And, speaking from experience, the continual reproof or restraint of a lunatic is really apt to wear away the edge of any sensibility an attendant may have. How much more irritating it must be to the patient so restrained. In some cases, without the use of

the camisole or gloves, there would, I think, be continual fights, in which the patients, in the end, must decidedly fare worse. It is better, too, I think, to tie an epileptic in his chair, as is done at Kew, than to let him continually fall out and bruise his face. Merely as a question of present expediency, I hold with a certain amount of mechanical restraint, as at Kew. As regards the curative influence, it seems to me logical that the passive restraint of the camisole should not be so irritating to the patient as active manual restraint. In the camisole the patient is prevented by a passive power from exercising or attempting any violence; but without it he can every minute make the attempt, and the active restraint of the attendant only aggravates his passion. He may be conquered for the moment, but he perseveres until his guardian's patience is worn out. In the two forms of treatment there seems to me the same difference as between a rough-rider's and the late Mr. Rarey's method of horse-breaking. The one, by pluck and skill, keeps his seat and subdues the animal for a time, after a long struggle; the other, by a few simple straps, immediately rendered his subject powerless: it could not resist and struggle, as under a rough-rider, a passive power controlled it. This, combined with a courage, gentleness, and skill possessed by few men, was Rarey's secret, and I saw many surprising results of his treatment. It seems to me that the difference, in extreme cases, between imposing the camisole, or leaving the patient under the special surveillance of an attendant, bears an analogy to the above. I have been thus careful in explaining my impressions of the system of restraint at Kew, as I have been told that my remarks thereon will doubtless afford a fresh text for the English press to wail over Victoria; and as

the medical profession here has, unfortunately, offered several opportunities for English moralists to dilate upon, I have been anxious to show, in justice to the colony and the medical officers of the asylums, that the amount of restraint is justifiable by good authorities, and that, as far as my experience goes, it is not abused. When I write "not more than three per cent. are in restraint," I should add, "and these not continuously."

On the evening of Wednesday, June 21, there was a ball in the asylum. These are held fortnightly, every alternate meeting being what is known as "a long night;" that is, the attendants, their friends (each attendant can invite two), and other visitors, are allowed to keep up the dance from half-past ten o'clock—when the patients retire—until after midnight. This, fortunately, was a long night, so I had a chance of seeing this style of amusement at its best. The tables in the large dining-hall were all placed together at one end, and cunningly draped by some painted calico, formed a platform for the band, and from this half-way down the hall a space was cleared, the forms being arranged in the other part as sitting accommodation for the patients. Festivities commenced at eight o'clock, when, from the different wards, the male and female patients who were allowed to be present were ushered in by their attendants. There were, in all, between 300 and 400, the men seated on one side and the females on the other. Most of the attendants were present, and sat at the end of the forms, or walked up and down between the patients. It did not look at all like a ball-room. The men, in their sad-coloured brown and grey moleskin suits, seemed anything but festive. The women, in their gay plaid woollen shawls, appeared more lively; amongst them, too, you could detect many little evidences of extra attention to their

toilette—a woman must be very mad indeed when she forgets that. The young lady attendants were of course particularly smart, the red badges on their arms appearing only an addition to their costume. At eight o'clock the band showed on the platform ; there was not much preliminary tuning up, as it only possesses one string apparatus, the violin of the leader (and that I believe is borrowed). This, a number of extraordinary brass wind instruments, a wonderful piccolo, and a piano form the band. And what a band ! It has been my lot to hear *al fresco* music in many streets of the world. I have been tortured by Germans, Italians, Tyrolese, Hungarians, Swiss, Highlanders, and other foreign performers on instruments of woe ; but never have I heard anything so frightfully atrocious as the band of the Kew Asylum. And the leader—never from the days of Cornelius, the first recorded *chef d'orchestre*, to those of Jullien, the great idol of my youthful days, has such a leader been seen. I have perchance sinned deeply in my time, but the punishment of listening another night to such discord would, I think, be more than I deserve. Each man plays (as Hal o' the Wynd fought) for his own hand, without time or tune, the piccolo always half a note above the rest. However, the performers endeavour to do their best, which copybooks tell us is always commendable. The first part of the programme commenced with a jig. About 100 of the patients stood up, and jumped up and down, or shuffled their feet to the strains of an abominable air, reputed to have been composed by one of the band, but which was, I believe, only an adaptation of "Lanagan's Ball." Many of the attendants, male and female, joined in the diversion, and encouraged the patients to enjoy themselves. After the jig there was a quadrille, then another jig, then a waltz, and jigs again to the number of five. The patients, with a very few

exceptions, were only allowed to join in the jigs. The other dances were gone through by the attendants and their friends : the visitors being in force on this night. Except in its very highest form, I dislike dancing. "The poetry of motion" is too often burlesqued and degraded. The dance is the prime agent of uncivilized man in arousing his passions ; the corroborree of the Australian aborigine having its compeer in all barbarism. Music alone lifts the modern dance above the caperings of the savage, and even that may be degraded to the service of the *carmagnole* and the *can can*. The jigs which were played at Kew were void of all harmony, and the jumps and shuffles of the lunatics were most painful to witness. They seemed excited with the exertion, which appeared to have the same effect on them as the war-dance has on a savage. Many of them seemed, to my eye, every moment growing madder, and their grotesque antics increased as the night wore on. To the spectators it was a fine show ; they laughed and applauded. I was disgusted with the performance, and the heartless conduct of the lookers-on. It may be that I take an extreme view of this subject. It is certain that the patients like the presence of visitors, and may not be aware that they are laughed at. But there are a great number sane enough to see that they are regarded as a show ; the fact that they are only put up to dance in the jigs is sufficient to indicate that, which, combined with the atrocious music and the hideous form of the dance, to my mind must have anything but a good effect upon them. However, people who are passionately fond of dancing appear to endure, at least in Australia, any accompaniment, as was evidenced by the number of visitors, and the presence of a young lady, a governess, who had only lately left the asylum cured, and had returned on this

night to mingle with her old friends amongst the attendants. A strange taste on her part, I thought ; but there is proverbially no accounting for such. At nine o'clock coffee was served out to the patients ; it was handed round in the tin pannikins in a rough and ready sort of way. Dr. Robertson made his appearance amongst us for a short time, and Dr. Watkins made a long stay, and joined in the dances. Whatever incipient excitement I might have fancied I detected amongst the dancers, I am bound to say it did not overtly develop itself, as only one man was taken out.

At half-past ten o'clock the patients were all marched back to their wards, sent to bed, and locked in. This being done, the attendants returned to the ball-room, and high jinks took place until midnight. I could have been furnished with many fair partners, but I was saddened and disgusted at what I had seen. Besides, I could not step to such music ; so I retired to smoke the pipe of solitude and moralise on the performance. I have stated my reasons for thinking that these balls, as at present conducted, cannot have a very salutary effect on the majority of the patients. I think concerts, or theatrical performances, would be far better. There is a lot of stage scenery at Kew, but it has been rarely used. The attendants do not manifest any interest in the amusements of the patients, and outside their regular duties will do little. Their work done, they wish to get away to town and to their friends, and the officers have not sufficient control over them to compel their assistance at amusements. The dance nights are held by many to be a great nuisance, as all the attendants have then to be present. The members of the band have some extra privilege of leave allowed them, and a certain amount of brandy to sustain their nerves while playing ; still service in the band is generally

looked on with disfavour, as it entails, or should do so, some sacrifice of the members' own time in practising. But as the result painfully shows, they practise very little. Many things at Kew want reforming—the band, certainly, not least.

The fortnightly balls at Kew are the only re-unions of the sexes there. The amusements altogether are limited, although in some wards there is a fair supply of books, papers, and playing-cards. But I think weekly concerts and lectures might be established with advantage. Nothing can be done with the present band and resident staff of musicians; still, volunteers might be procured from the ranks of the numerous talented young ladies and gentlemen around Melbourne. There are many embryo "stars" to whom the semi-public character of the entertainments would be a useful training; and many others would not, I hope, object to sacrifice a little of their time to give some slight amusement and solace to the afflicted ones at Kew. As regards lectures, it appears at first sight that this form of amusement is not exactly adapted to a lunatic asylum; but in some institutions in England and America such have been given with the best results. I have seen a bill of the lecture course of a Scotch asylum which comprised amongst its subjects "Chemical Affinity" and "Electricity." It is a disputed point as to whether the mental progress of our civilization has increased insanity or not. Some, and American physicians especially, hold that all that tends to a higher mental state of civilization also tends to promote insanity—that, in fact, the average human mind can only stand a certain amount of knowledge. But English physicians point to their statistics, and show that the percentage of patients from the country districts, where ignorance abounds, is far higher than that from the towns, or educated classes, and that ignorance and mental

stupor bring on insanity, not education or mental effort. So I believe that lectures, which would make the patients think and reason, or endeavour to do so, would be a great help in curative treatment. Surely there are many gentlemen in Melbourne who would assist in this work. I am afraid that, owing to the system on which Kew Asylum was built, we can hardly hope that schools will be established there, as in France and America. But more mental occupation of some sort should, I think, be provided for the patients.

I do not know if the billiard-room was originally intended for the use of the patients or of the attendants. The latter and the clerks, and others out of the office, certainly derive the most benefit from it. In the daytime a few of the convalescent patients are occasionally sent there in charge of an attendant, but after five o'clock it is given up to the officers. The outdoor amusements are, at this season, confined to bowls. The green, with a little attention, might be made a very good one, but it was only used once whilst I was at Kew. I was in charge of the patients who were sent out, and they seemed to enjoy the game. Dr. Molloy came and played with them, and everything passed off quietly and orderly. There is only one set of bowls, which is a pity, as this is a healthy and not too exciting amusement. In summer, cricket, of course, is the favourite game. I have never had an opportunity of witnessing this at an asylum, and cannot say how it is conducted. Amongst the attendants at Kew there are some great players, but what share the patients take in this pastime I cannot say. They are doubtless of great use in fielding out, whilst the officers bat and bowl. Many matches are played at Kew with various clubs, and I am told that the inmates on these occasions display great interest in the success of their "side," and loudly

cheer any victory which they may score. A new cricket-ground is at present being made, which, when finished, will be one of the best around Melbourne. At this the majority of the inmates who are working out are employed. In the garden, of five acres extent; in the farm, which is only a stock one at present, comprising thirty cows and a number of pigs; and at the new cricket-ground, about eighty men are employed. There are carpenters', shoemakers', and blacksmiths' shops, each in charge of an attendant, and one or two patients work in them; but the shops are only temporary ones, and provision has not been made for employing patients working at any trade. As I have pointed out, a certain number of patients work in each ward, but only for a short time in the morning, and they and many others have to wearily pass the day walking around the yards, or, worse, confined in their wards. It is dreary work for an attendant, and idleness, I am told, is as great a curse to a lunatic as to a sane man. More occupation for the body and employment for the mind is, I submit, wanted at Kew, but this cannot be efficiently provided or carried out until many things are altered. The visits of relatives and friends are a great source of comfort to the patients, and these are allowed at any time during week days, and visitors are also shown round the asylum; but on Sundays no visitor is admitted to see any patient after eleven o'clock. I do not know the exact cause of this regulation, and it has been pointed out to me as a great hardship to the friends of poor patients, who perhaps live some distance in the country. Sunday is the only day which they can spare, and even if they could get there in time, it would involve the cost of a special conveyance, as neither trains nor omnibuses run in the morning. I trust this will be altered.

The inmates of Kew are arbitrarily divided into two creeds—all those who are not Roman Catholics must be Protestants; *ergo*, members of the Church of England. There is no chapel, and the dining-hall serves for a place of worship as well as for a *casino*. Every facility is given to the worthy and genial gentleman who acts for Holy Church at Kew. His ministrations are, of course, in the morning; on Sunday afternoon the other established Church has its innings. A certain number of attendants are always appointed on duty here, and the number of Protestants amongst us being small, this falls pretty frequently to the lot of each, and is consequently looked upon with disfavour. I was told that I was a fool for not saying I was a R.C., when I should have got out of so much church. I was only scheduled to this duty once, however. At three o'clock the kitchen bell tolled dismally, and the attendants went to the yards to collect the patients who were to attend church. Many of the convalescents were anxious to attend, certainly not from any great faith, but as a relief to the monotony of the day. In each ward there is supposed to be a list kept of those who are "refractory, in seclusion, under restraint, or who attend amusements or chapel." This list is loosely compiled at the discretion of the ward attendant. From my experience, the mode of obtaining a congregation is a simple one. A couple of attendants went into the front yard, and picking out the quietest patients, ordered them to gather near the door. Under orders I opened the door, and the patients flocked out and marched to the hall. When about fifty had passed me, the attendant in charge (during the absence of Trumble) called out, "Shut the door. D'ye want to let 'em all out? That's quite enough." I thought to myself that if the men were quiet and orderly, there

was no reason why they should not all go to church, but I did as I was bid. However, when marched into the dining-hall, their number was not sufficiently imposing, and the order was given, "Go and fetch some more." About twenty more were accordingly "fetched," and the congregation then numbered about seventy males and thirty-five females, who were marched in at the opposite side of the hall. They sat on forms, as at the ball, the sexes separated. The clergyman who officiates as chaplain here was not present on this day, and the service was read by his son, a layman. It was really more depressing than the one I endured at the Benevolent Asylum. The attempt at singing was fearful—one man causing bursts of laughter by the extraordinary manner in which he pitched his notes. Some, no doubt, had an amount of religious feeling ; but the majority, just dragged there to make a show congregation, were decidedly not impressed by the service. Some behaved very badly ; one youth, chewing tobacco and keeping up a continual expectoration, should not have been allowed to remain. The attendants, too, did not set them the best example in church. It might be possible to train some of the attendants as a choir, and more carefully select the patients who should attend church, making this of some benefit to them—if not spiritual, at least curative. I am told that good sermons are given here occasionally ; that the Dean even preaches at times. I hope he does the lunatics good. After service, some thirty patients, in charge of four attendants, went for a walk in the paddock. We started along the road towards the lodge, then, striking to the left, we strolled under the trees to where the Yarra, which about this part seems not only to "flow on for ever," but everywhere, bounds the asylum grounds. The reserve is only 320 acres, not half large enough for the farm,

the industries, and out-door employments which, considering the size of the asylum, might be carried on. Our charges—of course all good cases—behaved themselves well. How they revelled in this comparative liberty! What a delight to them to ramble amongst the trees and pick up sticks and strips of bark, like schoolboys! And when we arrived at a knoll from whence there was a view of the river, the pleasant verdure of the bottom lands, the houses peeping through the trees around Heidelberg, and in the distance the Dandenongs, and beyond them, through the gap, higher and more distant mountains soaring into sunny cloudland—we sat down with our backs turned to the hated asylum walls, and the grateful prospect, for a time, soothed the minds of all. Then, returning, we made a circuit of the asylum. The small stud of the establishment was an object of great interest; climbing the fence was a pleasure—the very fact of being permitted to scale a barrier must have had a wonderful charm to these poor insane prisoners. So round by the dead-house we returned to the asylum, the walk having done us a thousand times more good than the church service; indeed, in my own case, the one was wanted to counteract the effect of the other.

Many, no doubt, will be curious to learn how I managed to get along in the highly respectable society of “civil servants,” in which I was thus intimately thrown. I think I did pretty well. An acquired *savoir faire*, and a native self-reliance (which an English friend of mine once emphatically, but coarsely, described as “d—d cheek”) has pulled me through worse experiences than those in Kew. For a few days it was a new experience, and, as such, acceptable; but after the first week the life was really hard to me, and nothing but a stern sense of duty to the country kept me from levanting. The

want of privacy worried me most. I have been generally daily accustomed to a few hours' quiet meditation or study, but at Kew I was hardly alone for a moment throughout the day or night. I dare not open my note-book, and was almost afraid to write to Miss O'Callaghan, the young lady through whose political influence I obtained my post. My fellow-attendants in the wards were not bad "mates," and some did me many little kindnesses; indeed, their solicitude as regards my matrimonial prospects was quite touching. Such interest in this did they display, and the battery of charms and substantial recommendations brought to bear on me were so powerful, that I believe if I had stopped in Kew another month they would have had me safely married in spite of myself. Perhaps this is another chance I have thrown away. Of course, I had to give an account of myself; everyone wanted to know how long I had been in the colony, why I came here, what was my previous calling, and who got me the place. I had to ventilate a pious fiction, and remembered certain experiences years ago, when all London was in a fright, dreading a Fenian outbreak, and when I, like the late Emperor Napoleon, was sworn in as a special constable, and, armed with a staff, patrolled outside a certain house near Kennington-oval, keeping watch and ward over bright eyes which were as the sun of heaven to me then. Oh! it was a rare joke; and the fun which was caused when I called for my "beer and cold mutton," in the orthodox "bobby" style, and was addressed as "Mr. Policeman!" I wished the Fenian scare to last for ever, that I might have an excuse for loitering round that house. Sadly thinking of these things, and pondering as to the sort of man who would be likely to take such a post as attendant at Kew, I said that I had been a policeman

in London, and described my beat. There was a substratum of truth in this ; but as murder, according to De Quincy, leads to other vices, so an implied or white lie leads on to others. It appeared that my room-mate had been in the Lancashire police, and he was down on me at once. But he didn't catch me tripping. I had a pretty extensive acquaintance amongst and was generally "known to the force" (rather a dubious recommendation) in London, and so I could answer queries as to districts, divisions, and superintendents. When, however, it came to the more intimate details of police management, I had to draw on my imagination ; and the wonderful stories I told of the duties of the metropolitan police, and their ways, manners, and customs, would, I think, slightly astonish Colonel Henderson. I crushed the Manchester bobby (an Irishman). He was a mere provincial, and his experiences could not for a moment compete with mine. The startling assertion that "on my beat I had twenty-five pints of beer allowed me each day from the public-houses" finished him, and before I left the asylum I believe the current opinion prevailed that he was a fraud, and had never been in any force at all. So hard is it to distinguish truth from fiction.

The recent inquiry at Kew was often a subject of conversation amongst the attendants. As it principally referred to the female side, opinions were freely given. One extraordinary statement was several times made with reference to the death of the patient Lewis in December last, on which the board have made a preliminary report. It will be remembered in this case that, after death, the ribs were found to be broken. At the inquest the jury, following the medical evidence, returned a verdict of "Death from maniacal exhaustion ;" but the board of inquiry say—"We are forced to the conclusion that the death of

Lewis was caused by the injection of morphia," although they acquit the medical officers of any blame. The attendants say that, *after death*, the medical officers broke the ribs to put the blame on them, knowing that death was caused by the overdose of morphia. This, of course, I hold to be absurd, and I merely quote it to show that the idea is prevalent amongst the attendants that such a trifle as breaking a man's ribs *might* happen amongst them, and the doctors be aware of the fact. As to the general treatment of the patients by the attendants, I write with much reluctance ; and even in fulfilling what I believe to be a public duty, I feel rather mean. I have been called hard names lately. I have been called "a spy, a detective, a vagabond by profession as well as name." That is just it ; I don't pretend to be more or less. *Vagus nascitur et fit*. So, gentlemen of the guard, fire away ; my thick skin is impervious to your wordy pellets. But, in this instance, where I have been one of them myself, and have eaten, drunk, smoked, and played cards with the attendants, I do feel a certain hesitation. Not with the intention of discovering abuses have I acted the part of a spy on their actions. I had no wish to discover faults, but I must write a truthful account of what I saw in the asylum. Feeling as I do, I certainly shall "not set down aught in malice ;" indeed, am more likely to somewhat extenuate. There are many of the men good, honest, and straightforward in things indifferent, but totally unfitted for the post of attendant at a lunatic asylum, and too fond of strong drink. They are simply morally disqualified for the place—not actively cruel, for all that I have pointed out which may savour of such arises only from a want of sympathy with the lunatic's state, and from impatience when he is troublesome. The attendants are kind sometimes, but it is the

kindness of the gaoler. It is the gaol system on which Kew is built, and of which I shall speak hereafter, which has much to do with the conduct of the attendants. The patients are prisoners, and the habit of commanding and ordering them about as such grows on one. I found that my charges were so used to this harshness of tone that I was almost compelled to adopt it, and many times discovered, to my disgust, that I was myself lapsing into a habit of bullying the patients. The promiscuous "clouting" with which the troublesome patients are treated begins with a gentle tap, given as a reminder, and ends in a smart blow. We have all seen how parents, in certain positions in life, kind to their children, in other respects, get into the habit of smartly boxing their ears on the most trifling occasion. So it is with respect to "clouting;" the habit grows on one. Many a time I have been shocked to see a poor lunatic shrink from an expected blow, when I have put out my hand to lead or assist him.

I only saw one real wanton case of cruelty, and this I record to show how hard it is for the superintendent to bring home any case of the kind to the offending party. In one of the wards a patient was confined to his bed with some slight illness. One of the men who assisted in the ward took him his dinner, and the man, from some wanton caprice or other—and, being in a lunatic asylum, he was surely entitled to have caprices—threw away the tin plate containing his meat. I, as a new chum, should certainly have let him have his own way; but another attendant came in, and swearing at the man, struck him several times on the back of the neck. Then he passed his arm round his throat and garrotted him, dragged him out of bed on to the ground, half strangling him; then gave him a dozen more blows on the back of the head and

neck. After this gentle "lambing down," the man was bundled into bed again, and told to eat his dinner. I had hard work to restrain myself whilst this was going on, and had to clench my hands in my pockets and walk out of the dormitory. When the performance was over, the attendant, panting with his exertions, left the room, and I went and saw that the man, although he had received a good thrashing, was not injured. I saw, by the manner in which the blows were delivered at the fleshy part of the neck, that they would not injure nor bruise. After a time the attendant, remembering, I suppose, that I was a new chum, and perhaps not used to that sort of thing, came to me and said, "If that man complains to the doctor, of course you know nothing about it. We have to dress 'em down occasionally; it does 'em good, and acts as a warning to the rest." "Do they complain?" I asked. "Oh, yes! but there's only a patient's word against an attendant's, and whatever the Super. may think, it's a Scotch verdict—a case of not proven." Now this attendant was not an actively cruel man. I have seen him behave kindly to many patients; but he was simply brought up in the creed that lunatics must be controlled and coerced like convicts, and that, if they rebelled, sharp and swift punishment was the best thing for them. Strange to say, the next day the patient forgot all about the circumstance when Dr. Robertson came round; but on the day following he minutely recounted the assault. My answer, when charged with knowledge of the case, was a prevarication, "I did not strike the man, sir." A patient who was present, and had, of course, been cautioned, denied that the man had been struck, and the attendant was virtuously indignant at the charge. So the matter ended—not proven. Thus, Dr. Robertson may morally be certain that an

attendant has been guilty of cruelty, and yet be unable to show the slightest proof. In this case, I am not going to give any further evidence against this man. I did not interfere when he thrashed the patient, as, if I had done so, my little game in the asylum would certainly have been stopped. It seemed to me better that the poor man should have a beating, and that I should so be enabled to discover how it would be hushed up, and expose the same through the columns of *The Argus*, than that I should give the attendant a thrashing, or receive one from his hand, and subsequently find my occupation gone. So, as I was *particeps criminis*, I shall not testify, except by these presents, against my late comrade. Some people will say that I am truly a vagabond to allow a man to be beaten in my presence for the purpose of pointing a moral and adorning this tale. I felt somewhat that way myself, but I made it up to the victim by daily supplying him with more tobacco than he could use. On this question of cruelty and coercion of patients, it should be remembered, however, that a certain amount of violence is necessary in controlling a raving maniac, or in putting him in a camisole. But the amount of this is not likely to be diminished by the acquired habit of clouting mere harmless, troublesome patients. In justice to the attendants, too, I must state that sometimes they get rather severely injured from bites or scratches. The bite of a lunatic seems to be particularly poisonous, and two men at Kew have suffered severely from bites from Chinamen, who, when violent, are the worst patients, their manner of fighting being heathenish. But in my own experience, unless provoked, a lunatic at large in the wards or yard would never attack an attendant, although several times I have seen struggles caused through attempts to coerce them. Many attendants have a sort of pride in conquering a lunatic

single-handed—a very bad practice, as it only enrages the patient, and entails a chance of injury to themselves.

In the recently-published life of Lord Macaulay there is a capital story of Clive. During the height of his power in India, a young gentleman came out from England, with strong letters of recommendation from the Ministers of the day. Clive looked at the youth and at the letters. "How much do you expect to make here?" he asked, abruptly. "I shall be glad of any appointment in which I can be useful," replied the aspirant, humbly. "Nonsense! Will a lac of rupees satisfy you?" The youth owned that it far exceeded his expectations, and Clive immediately wrote an order for the amount, and sent him home by the ship in which he came. Certainly, the country was defrauded to pay this amount: but if the youth had been placed in office, it would have been both defrauded and misgoverned. I think, in the end, the Treasury of Victoria would not suffer, and the public business would certainly be more efficaciously conducted, if many of the present office-holders and office-seekers were dismissed in this manner. Give them a few hundreds each, and let them go and open public-houses, the possession of which is the pet ambition of every ex-warrior. In Kew, as in other branches of the civil service, political influence is supreme. At the late inquiry, Dr. Robertson testified, "the present inefficiency of the institution is solely due to the mode in which the appointment of attendants is vested in the Government. When once appointed, they are as secure in their positions as the superintendent himself, however incompetent or unfit for their duties they may prove themselves to be. I am strongly of opinion that the asylum will never be efficiently managed until the sole control of the attendants is placed in the hands of the superintendent, who is

to be responsible to a board of visitors." It seems at first sight a strong statement that everything wrong at Kew is to be charged on the attendants ; but when one reads and studies the advice of the Commissioners of Lunacy for Scotland—"Your first attempt ought to be to cure your keepers ; you need not proceed to your patients until you have done so"—one recognizes the force of the remark. The success of curative treatment, and the comfort of the patients, depends in the long run almost entirely upon the attendants, and we cannot obtain too good men, or pay them too well. Perhaps it is not possible here to obtain the same class of men as in England, but at least they might be trained to obey instructions. How does the case stand? Of the fifty attendants at Kew, the majority came in under the old system, with salaries commencing at £65, and advancing yearly to £120 per annum. At the age of sixty they were entitled to superannuation. This, with board, lodging, and washing, was an inducement to many men who did not want much hard work ; and so, by political influence, and without any regard to their qualifications, the majority of attendants were appointed. Apparently, it began to be recognized by the authorities that this system was working badly, for all new attendants are now only appointed on probation for three years, with salaries commencing at £1, and advancing to 24s. a week. They are liable to be dismissed at a week's notice, and to forfeit their appointment if they marry. Now, the majority of attendants, secure in their posts, can almost defy the superintendent ; he can only reprimand them. Dr. Paley, the inspector, can impose a fine ; but that can be, and I believe often is, remitted by the Chief Secretary. The other day, when attending the House, I met one of the warders loafing about the lobbies. He was waiting for his friend, the member, to get

the Chief Secretary to reduce or remit a fine of £5 which had been imposed on him : it was for drunkenness and assault on the night watchman. Since then he has been guilty of a little breach of discipline, which he will appreciate my motives for not mentioning. Should by any chance an attendant be dismissed, he may "apply for a board," and cost the country hundreds of pounds. But these old hands do not often get fined, and are never dismissed. They have friends in office who look after them. Should the superintendent of any asylum report a man unfit, or not competent, the question is, "What has he done?" Now, I think that a medical superintendent may be very well satisfied that a man is a bad attendant without having, or being able, to prove a case against him, as in a police court. In this connexion, placing the attendants as "civil servants," on almost exactly the same footing as the medical officers, is a democratic system of civil government which I dare say is presumed to have been borrowed from America, but is certainly not so as regards asylums.

In the United States the majority of public asylums are the property of the different States, erected and maintained by sums voted in the Legislatures, and therefore corresponding, in every respect, to the asylums in Victoria. The State Executive does not govern these institutions, but appoints commissioners, trustees, or a board of management. In the town asylums the city authorities are the governing body, who generally appoint commissioners who are responsible to them. Of all countries in the world, the United States has been notorious as the home of place-hunters and office-seekers, and political patronage is certainly carried out there to a great extent, it being fully acknowledged by all parties that to the victor belong the spoils. Yet, in the management of asylums, the Executive gives

over its power to commissioners, who appoint the superintendent, and we read, "He nominates to the board of management all the officers, and appoints and discharges all attendants and servants." This is quoted from the "Report on Lunatic Asylums," by Dr. Manning, of Sydney, and a good knowledge of the workings of American public institutions assures me that it is correct. Political influence may there, as here, cause all appointments, from the highest to the lowest, in any institution ; but, once appointed, the subordinate officers have to obey their chief—he is "the boss," and he makes them know it. A professional man, or a gentleman appointed head of any public charity, would not, as at Kew, find that he can be almost defied by his subordinates, and that they can break rules with impunity, knowing that they hold as good a tenure of their places as he of his. Nowhere, perhaps, is personal self-respect, and respect for the feelings of other, so thoroughly inculcated as in the States, and no executive or board of management would think of insulting an officer whom they had appointed chief by maintaining in his place any inferior whom he might characterise as incompetent or insubordinate. The man might have good friends, but he would have to go, and they would find him another place. As regards British asylums, Dr. Manning writes :—"The appointment of officers and servants rests entirely with the committee of visitors, who, however, generally delegate their authority to him (the superintendent) so far as attendants and servants are concerned, reserving to themselves the right of the subsequent approval of the appointments or dismissals made by him. In the case of officers he is generally consulted, although the committee makes the appointments." Dr. Robertson, therefore, had reason in his statement, and personal experience convinces me of the

folly of the present mode of controlling the attendants. Many care little for the superintendent's authority, and shirk all work and orders given which may be obnoxious to them. I have seen an order given by the medical officers, and the minute the door was closed behind them the exact contrary was done. There does not appear to be, amongst the majority of the attendants, the slightest idea of discipline ; and the thirty-nine rules are as little heeded by them, and, indeed, as little known, as the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England are by most of its followers. Sir James M'Culloch has declared himself anxious to deal with the evil of Government patronage on the railways ; in the asylums the evil is still more glaring, as the bodies and minds of the citizens of Victoria suffer thereby.

The newly-appointed attendants, who only obtain £1 a week, have a grievance which should be righted. These men have to perform exactly the same duties as others obtaining £120 a year. In lowering the scale of attendants' pay, and making the post one not likely to be sought for by political followers, it has been made one which nobody who can obtain any other work will take. The present men, as good or bad in their way as their seniors, and who, under a proper system, might be trained and made efficient attendants, are not likely to stop if they can obtain anything better. At the present general rates of wages in the colony, the salary offered is absurd ; and, unless this is soon altered, there will be a continual discontent and change of officers in the asylums. Speaking from experience, I can emphatically say that the present rate of pay is quite inadequate ; and I trust the Chief Secretary will take notice of Dr. Robertson's suggestions on this point, and make an attendant's post of greater pecuniary value before I again take a situation in an asylum.

The Angel of Death hovers continually over Kew, but he brings no terror with him. Death is relief to many of these poor lunatics : it must bring heaven, for their present existence is a hell. They die quietly, often in a stupor, or in sleep caused by an opiate. I only saw one death. A patient in B 1 ward was taken with "a fit," after he had been in bed some time. He was stretched out on his bed on the floor, sprinkled with water, and the doctor sent for. I thought myself that the man was dying ; but the doctor ordered him to be taken down to the hospital ward. This was done, and in ten minutes afterwards the man was a corpse. This patient was not supposed to be ailing, and it is so, I believe, in many cases. They cannot explain when they are ill, or their symptoms. They may refuse to eat, or may sit on one side as if in pain, but no one takes any notice of the vagaries of a lunatic. Evidences which would denote the sickness of a sane man go for nothing here. The medical officers, who make their visits *pro forma*, cannot amongst this vast number examine each case, and must trust to the attendants, who are not competent, even if anxious, to diagnose their charges. A *post mortem* examination is made and an inquest held on each case. The verdict, of course, is generally, according to the professional evidence, "from natural causes." That may be, and doubtless is, true ; but I should very much like to know if, in many cases, death might not have been prevented if proper measures had been taken in time. I think it will be found that a large proportion of the deaths take place in a very short time after the (supposed) first seizure. The poor lunatic may have been suffering for a long time, but if he can just crawl about and does not complain, not having the sense to do so, no one takes any notice of him. I have before pointed out the high standard of health prevailing

here; but, in a settlement of 1,000 souls of all ages, Death must claim his periodical due. Could he not be cheated of certain victims, for a time at least? During the winter months the newspapers almost daily record inquests at Kew; the cold weather kill off many who might perchance survive if the attendants gave the requisite attention to their individual comforts and complaints.

The members of the board of visitors visit Kew often, some one of them at least weekly. The professional members generally go through the hospital ward; the others make a little tour of the buildings, and often drop into the dining-hall at meal-times. Once a quarter they inspect all the patients, who are mustered in their different wards. I luckily was present at one of these inspections, which was on Wednesday, June 28. The inmates of B 1 were all ranged on forms and seats in the corridor, a wet towel and a comb being brought into requisition to smarten them up. Dr. Campbell went through this ward, and the inspection was a formal farce. The object of this quarterly inspection is, I presume, to individually examine all the patients who are in the asylum, and to see if they appear well treated, and hear any complaints. This being the case, the visitors should first ascertain from the books in the office the total number of patients in the asylum and in the different wards, and should have lists of those in each ward. But as the inspection was conducted, a troublesome patient might be locked up in a dormitory, or anywhere out of the way, till the farce was over. Dr. Campbell entered the ward, accompanied by one of the medical officers; the ward attendant brought him the list of patients. "Ah! ninety-three patients here. Well, you call out the names." So without looking at the list himself, Dr. Campbell

scrutinized each man through his eye-glass as the name was called out. It was hardly to be expected that he knew Tom Jones from Bill Sykes ; and, as the list was not checked, he was quite at the mercy of the attendant, who might have skipped two or three names without his knowledge. In fact, in a crowded ward like B 1, it might be possible for an inmate to have escaped, or to have been dead and buried for years, and still be on the roll, without the fraud being discovered ; this is, supposing that he had no friends to visit him, or anything to bring his identity to the superintendent's memory, and that the ward attendant had reasons for concealment. This board is, however, a very good institution, and I believe that the members are fully alive to many of the present evils at Kew, and that they have repeatedly reported them to the Chief Secretary, without effect—notably as regards the overcrowding, and also as to the necessity of boarding out harmless patients, following the course pursued with pauper orphan children, which has worked so well.

My impressions are that a properly constituted visiting board should have more power in controlling the management of the asylums at Kew and Yarra Bend, and that the appointment of officers should be vested in it, taking all patronage from the political head of the department. At present, members of the board visit the asylums, record their individual theories in a book, and once a quarter make a report. But they have not the slightest power of control even over the attendants, and cannot order a man to be fined. An attendant who the visitors, as well as Dr. Robertson, may be assured is thoroughly incompetent, can, if he has good political influence, keep his place and defy them. This board should be made an institution, and the members endowed with responsibility to the country. The

inspector, Dr. Paley, might add to his other duties that of chairman of the board, and would bring practical experience of the working of asylums to assist its deliberations. An efficient board would, I think, see the folly of curtailing the authority of the medical superintendent, and would, certainly, as regards the appointment and punishment of attendants, give him sufficient power, when also he could logically be held responsible. The charitable institutions which are almost entirely supported by Government grants, such as the Benevolent Asylum and Immigrants' Home, must eventually become controlled by the Government, in which case a board of commissioners of charities and asylums, sub-committees of which might be delegated to look after particular institutions, would, I think, be the proper governing body. Our Benevolent and Lunatic Asylums should certainly be worked together : as it is at present, the latter are crowded with inmates foisted on them by the former. The board of visitors might usefully endeavour to do something for the discharged lunatic. There is a "Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society," but the unfortunate inmate of Kew has no one to aid him to commence the world anew. He has been guilty of no crime, although he has received the treatment of a criminal : pronounced cured, he is thrown on the world often without prospects of any kind. There is little wonder that frequently the struggle for existence again unhinges his brain.

The question as to the power which should be delegated to a medical superintendent applies not only to Kew, but to every lunatic asylum, present or future ; and not only to Dr. Robertson, but to his successors. As to this gentleman's capability for, and attention to, the duties of his office, an attendant's evidence gives the key-note. This was one of the most intelli-

gent and best men in the asylum, but unfortunately nearly wrecked on the rock of colonial drink. "The super. ain't a bad sort," said he to me. "He's down on you pretty sharp some time, perhaps ; but you see he's fond of this sort of thing. It's his hobby." From the opportunities I had of judging, this man was pretty correct. His remark, translated from the vernacular, meant that Dr. Robertson is an enthusiast in his professional speciality. Now, enthusiasts in the employment of most Governments, and particularly in that of Victoria, are rare, and it was quite refreshing to meet with one. Men who occupy office with any other idea than that of making what they can out of it (and I do not mean this offensively, for the *res angusta domi* too often control and influence the best and noblest of us, killing our minds and souls) are scarce here, and when found should be appreciated. No man, I believe, can take a greater interest in his office, and more thoroughly try to do his duty to the patients, than does Dr. Robertson. If the amount of success he meets with is not always proportionate to his endeavours, it is owing, I believe, to the many blots to be found in the system on which Kew was built, and has to be maintained, and to the unsatisfactory condition of things amongst the attendants. I have shown the difficulty which a superintendent, even with full powers, must have in detecting cases of ill-usage : when such are detected, however, Dr. Robertson may find that all his endeavours to have the offenders punished are overturned by the decision of the Chief Secretary. Such a state of things must greatly militate against the efficiency of an institution ; as the power of reprimand, which is all Dr. Robertson is vested with, is not of much account. He endeavours, by extra personal supervision, to remedy the want of individual responsibility, and that sense of personal carelessness prevalent amongst the

attendants. Twice a day the superintendent visits every part of the asylum ; and, as I have before said, we were never sure as to when he would drop in upon us. The wards, however, are long, and the sound of a key in the lock was a sign to look smart. We generally possessed very summary ideas as to a superintendent's duties, the popular theory being, that once a day he should march through the wards when we had everything nice and regular to the outward eye, and that a visit at any other time was an outrage. I was very much amused one day at the remark of an attendant who was on guard with me in the side-yard. Looking up, I saw Dr. Robertson and Dr. Watkins standing at a window in one of the up-stairs wards, and watching the proceedings of the lunatics in the yards. "Look out, there's the super.," said I. "Well, that's what I call most ungentlemanly," said my comrade ; "haven't they been through the yard, and now to stand watching us that way. Shure no gentleman would be guilty of such a thing." To the patients Dr. Robertson was uniformly kind and attentive, and listened to their many vagaries and complaints. He is very careful in demanding the reason for any external bruises ; but, of course, an attendant's answer is ready. Dr. Robertson also knows that a patient will often groundlessly make complaints against an attendant if he takes a dislike to him. *Par exemple* : I had only been in B 1 a day, when the doctor, during inspection, called me to him. "What have you been doing to this man ? He complains of you." "I have done nothing, sir. What does he complain of ?" said I. "Don't you believe him, doctor. Ever since he's been here I've had a pain right through me, and I'm sure it must be him : he runs something in me." Dr. Robertson then saw that this was illusory, and I escaped being reported, or noted in the Ward Book. For three days this

patient maintained a great dislike to me, but afterwards we were always good friends.

The two medical officers have not such hard work as the superintendent, and certainly have less worry and anxiety. In the general duties of their profession they will learn little, as the practice in the hospital wards is limited. And as regards lunacy, I question if walking through the wards three times in two days teaches them much. To patients in the receiving wards, of course, greater attention is given ; but, drafted from there, and lost in one of the crowded wards, a case is controlled by the attendants and not by the doctors. A man of some education and intelligence would, I believe, learn more of lunacy in three months as an attendant than the medical officers would in a year. Positions in our asylums are accepted by young medical men, not because they feel any special vocation to administer to the insane, but from the same reason as an attendant's—because they can, *pro tem.*, get nothing better. The salaries paid to junior medical officers are so very small, and the prospect of advancement so dubious, that I am not surprised to hear of asylum surgeons continually leaving for hospital or private practice. Next to the superintendent, the head-warder has the most trying and responsible post. Trumble is a good man for the place, does his best, or the best that can be done. He struck me as having too much of the *laissez faire* about him ; but perhaps he is right in leaving well alone. He, I presume, knows how hard it is to control attendants by a mere nominal authority. The steward in an asylum is an important personage. He is the immediate superior of the clerks in the office, the storemen, engineers, carters, gardeners, messengers, &c., for the due fulfilment of whose duties he is responsible. The present steward at Kew is a handsome,

“-killing” looking young man, who, I presume, is quite fitted for his post, as he was formerly steward at Ararat when Dr. Robertson was superintendent there. I had, of course, no opportunity of criticising his work. As regards the management of the stores, however, my attention was drawn to the fact that some of the attendants wear the new clothing given out for the patients’ use. I have seen cases of this. The blue cloth pea-jackets, the boots, and socks are articles of apparel in favour with the attendants. Much of the clothing is marked, but some patients object to wear it, saying that they “are not in gaol.” Some private mark or peculiarity of shape might, however, be adopted to distinguish Government property. The attendants are also accused of using the tobacco supplied to the patients. This is so very bad, that I think it generally finds its way to its proper destination. But many little irregularities of this sort cannot be prevented: a certain amount of confidence must be reposed in attendants in charge of stores, and if they abuse it, the punishment should be sharp and swift. Of that, they have little fear now.

The female side at Kew is almost exactly the same as the male. There are the same number of wards, but some of them are smaller, being curtailed by the space occupied by the laundry and drying-ground. A visitor here realizes at once that he is in a lunatic asylum. I do not know if, in insanity, the features of women are in reality more changed than men’s; but it appeared so to me. Women of all periods have been so much a mere reflection of the fashion of the day, as regards their apparel and the mode of dressing their hair, that, doubtless, many of these poor creatures, attired in shapeless gowns of print or linsey, and with their disordered locks streaming around them, appear much more mad than they really are. In the

hospital wards the scene is very sad. Women, with their heads shaved around the crown, or with their hair all cut short, lie in bed, having lost, with their tresses, all trace of their sex. In the exercising yards the same difference is seen. Old and young women walk around, crooning to themselves, or tragically waving their hands. Many are possessed with a melancholy apathy, and, covering their heads with their dresses, lie around on the ground, crouched up like wild beasts. Some are particularly garrulous, and, of course, under the impression that they are being detained for the purpose of extortion. The medical officers have, I believe, a harder time of it on this side, and Dr. Robertson is much run after by ladies who abuse him freely. Some of the patients, with erotic tendencies, will seize upon and kiss the doctors, greatly to the amusement of the female attendants. In some of the wards, a few patients may be doing some needlework, or others reading; but altogether there is, if anything, a more dismal appearance here than on the male side, and the rough walls, not much softened by the bilious-coloured paint, together with the cheerless aspect of the windows, *sans* blinds and curtains, more than ever suggest a gaol. A small room over the stores, at the bottom of the centre wing, containing the dining-hall and kitchen, is the sewing-room, where all the female apparel is made. This is too small and close. In this and in the laundry a number of women are employed. Steam is used for washing, and every new improvement is in vogue. The patients in the laundry seem cheerful, and work well. There is no doubt that physical employment is a great relief to a disordered brain.

As regards the treatment of their charges by the female attendants, I can, of course, say little from personal experience. The late inquiry clearly showed that tenderness is not the rule.

The superintendent and the medical officers cannot exercise such a supervision over this department, and the attendants have things more their own way. And who so cruel to a woman as one of her own sex? I think I would far rather be under the senior attendant in B 1, than trust to the tender mercies of some of the "young ladies" at Kew. It is not alone, I am informed, absolute cruelty or violence which they are guilty of, but a continual succession of spiteful insults, which a woman knows so well how to inflict on another. I have suggested the sort of jokes with which the male attendants chaff the patients. Taking into consideration that the female attendants are of the same rank in life, and accustomed to the same refined language in their privacy, one can easily imagine how they can torture and degrade their poor charges, whose sex makes them more convenient targets for low abuse. I was accustomed to meet a great many of the "young ladies" in the hall-porter's room at night; a neutral ground where we congregated when signing the book off duty. Very nice young ladies, indeed, some of them; but in the course of general conversation I found out one thing which appeared generally to distinguish them from the male attendants. These latter might "correct" or "clout" a patient, perhaps even administer a good beating; but I never met a man who either expressed or had any malice against a patient. But the young ladies, on the contrary, spoke of some of their charges with a venom and spitefulness which did not argue well for their comfort. The evidence at the late inquiry was, I think, pretty conclusive as to the existence of a state of feeling towards the female patients which good attendants should not possess. There is, however, little fear of any gross outrages being perpetrated in the female division, owing to the jealousies which

exist, and quarrels which take place amongst the "young ladies." There are about forty in all, and I believe their mess-room is a nice little pandemonium sometimes. One ward is jealous of another ward, and the attendants of these will not speak to each other. I have been often amused, when talking to a charming attendant, to see another pass with her nose in the air, not deigning to notice me whilst conversing with one of her foes. How all sorts and conditions of women do love each other. The salary of these young ladies is £26 per annum—not the wages of a good housemaid. The great attraction of the post is that they can always obtain a day, and often a night, off in the week. They are "young ladies," and not servants, and are accosted with the title of "Miss." When they come into town, they enjoy themselves at the theatres, &c.; and should any "gentleman friend" find out a connection with Kew, the young lady immediately claims to be either the matron or the teacher. I believe the matron has thus a good many pranks put down to her charge. There are out of the forty some very superior to the rest; and those charming young ladies to whom I was so formally introduced can flatter themselves that they are of the number. I won't tell any more tales out of school.

The idea which seems to prevail throughout the system at Kew—that an inmate once through the doors is as a prisoner to be watched, guarded, and fed, taken out to exercise and bathed by arbitrary rule—is, I believe, radically wrong. A patient is sent there to be cured, or, at least, an endeavour is to be made to do so, and, with the exception of the restraint necessary to effect that cure, I think he should be left a free agent, and allowed to assert his own individuality. His delusions, if harmless, might even be humoured for a time, without any ill effect. On this point, Dr. Forbes Winslow says:—"In

the management of the insane, and in the conduct of asylums, both public and private, the principle of treatment should consist in a full and liberal recognition of the importance of extending to the insane the maximum amount of liberty and indulgence compatible with their safety, security, and recovery; at the same time subjecting them to the minimum degree of mechanical or moral restraint, isolation, seclusion, or surveillance consistent with their actual morbid state of mind at the time. It is also necessary to bear in mind, as an essential principle of curative treatment, the importance of bringing the insane confined in asylums as much as possible within the sphere of social, kindly, and domestic influences. In our moral treatment, do we not occasionally exhibit an excess of caution, and exercise—with the best and kindest intention—an undue amount of moral restraint and vigilance? I think we err in being too distrustful of the insane. In many phases of insanity in which confinement is indispensable, the patient's word may be fully relied upon, and, under certain well-defined restrictions, he should be permitted to feel that confidence is reposed in him, and that he is trusted, and not altogether (although in confinement) deprived of his free and independent agency. I feel quite assured that a judicious liberality of this kind will be generally followed by the happiest curative results, and greatly conduce to the comfort and happiness of the patients." But the very form of the buildings of the Kew Asylum prevents any such judicious treatment being carried out there. Outwardly, and from a distance, like a palace; inside, it is as a workhouse or a gaol. This external influence is felt all throughout, and the very bricks and mortar of the wards, the bolts, bars, and locks, forbid any but a modification of the iron system of a gaol or workhouse being used. The three new asylums at Ararat,

Beechworth, and Kew are all built on the same plan, and the same system must necessarily be carried out at each. The buildings and system are modelled on those of the lunatic barracks at Colney Hatch and Hanwell, and the old county asylums in England, which, at the time of their erection, were considered to combine the *ne plus ultra* of asylum architecture and management.

Cannot the outward form and inward system of our future lunatic asylums be altered so as to change the mode of treatment, or have we in Kew attained the perfection of such places? If so, the result is pitiable. But, according to my lights, I hold that the building of Kew Asylum, in its present form, was one of the greatest mistakes ever made in Victoria. The treatment of lunatics has varied throughout all ages. From Holy Writ we find that those "possessed with an evil spirit of the Lord" were respected. In the New Testament we see the phrase is changed to "possessed with devils," but the unfortunates were always looked upon with pity and compassion. From the perusal of the Gospels it is evident that epilepsy had then become frightfully common among the Jews. To this day they and the Quakers furnish, in this respect, sad examples of the evil of intermarriages. Amongst the ancients the loss of mind, or mental delusion, was a protection to the afflicted one. It might be caused by "an evil spirit of the Lord," as in the case of the noble Saul, or "an affliction of the gods" amongst the Greeks and Romans. But that it was a protection is shown by the fact of King David, Ulysses, Solon, and Brutus, all having feigned madness to carry on their designs with impunity. To this day in the East, and amongst most savage tribes of the world, the madman is sacred. With the Christian era came the sway of demonology, and the lunatic

was held to be under the control of such-and-such a fiend, according to his case. The priesthood, I believe, always taught that the devil was the cause of madness; and so by degrees the possessed of the devil began to be hated as the devil, and with the advance of civilization, the treatment of the poor lunatic became worse.

When through Mrs. Scott Siddons' sweet lips trippingly comes the sentence, "Love is merely a madness, and I can tell you deserve as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do," we laugh and applaud, and reckon little of the frightful state of society in which a poor lunatic was confined in a dark dungeon and scourged like a slave. In "King Lear," Shakespeare again intimates the condition of the madman in his day. Edgar, proclaiming his intention of personating a "Bedlam beggar," says:—

"I am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast; my face I'll grime with filth,
Blanket my loins, elf all my hair in knots,
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds and persecutions of the sky."

In those days, the patients in Bedlam Hospital were not only exhibited to the public at so much a head, like wild beasts in cages, and treated and made sport of by the visitors like animals in a show, but with badges affixed to their arms, the comparatively harmless cases were turned out to wander and beg in the streets, and were known as "Tom-o'-Bedlams." The Reformation had not brought with it any clearer or more civilized notion of the madman's state, or how he should be treated. Burton, in that wonderful work, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, describes one of the causes of madness as "from

the devil immediately or by magicians and witches," and states that it can be cured "by charms and incantations, although the same are not lawful means for a Christian man to use." The sturdy old Protestant would not, however, admit that "the madman who naked in chains doth lie" could receive any benefit from prayers at, or offerings to, saints' shrines. Later on Horace Walpole, describing the Gordon riots, says—"they threaten to let the lions out of the tower and the madmen out of Bedlam;" and Hogarth's sketches show that the lunatic was still treated as a wild beast. Bedlam was one of the favourite shows of London; and in Paris, the citizens also flocked to Bicêtre to make sport of the madmen. Eugene Sue, in one of his novels, has graphically sketched the scenes there. In the memories of our grandfathers, naked lunatics were chained in dungeons—their beds bundles of straw. The stride that has been made in public opinion and medical treatment, within the last fifty years, is a great one; but the old feeling has not died out, and is seen in the gaol system on which all English asylums are built and managed. Lunacy is considered to be a crime, instead of a misfortune. It is, I believe, a misdemeanour. At all events, we read often of a person charged with "being a lunatic at large." This is the key-note of the system on which Kew was built, and until that, and public opinion also, are altered, we shall hardly get attendants to treat patients other than as prisoners.

But within the last twenty-five years attention has been drawn to another system of treating insanity. In a little village in Belgium, for 1,200 years, madmen have been treated in a rational, kindly manner, and the principle of almost entire non-restraint carried out; whilst in England, the horrors of old Bedlam were in full force. The lunatic colony of Gheel (the forerunner in

the cottage and boarding-out system, as opposed to that of large asylums), is situated near Surnhout, in Belgium, in the centre of a large uncultivated plain of heath and sand, called the Campine. It affords a wonderful example of the great advantages of the mode in vogue there of managing lunatics. Until a few years back it was so out of the ordinary track, that few people were aware of its existence. Gheel owes its origin to a so-called miracle: many traditions which the faithful of all sects receive as genuine miracles appear to have had less useful results. Saint Dymphna, daughter of an Irish king, is said to have suffered martyrdom in this place, from the hand of her father, in the sixth century. What the Irish royal family were doing in Belgium, the tradition does not state. Perhaps they were taking the waters, or gambling at Spa, or were visiting the site of the future battle of Waterloo. From some good cause—perhaps because she was of weak intellect herself—Saint Dymphna became the patron saint of lunatics. So great became her fame as such, that the shrine erected in the church dedicated to her was speedily the resort of pilgrims, who journeyed, or were taken by their friends thither, in the hope of being cured of their madness, or of preventing its advent. Her elegantly sculptured tomb contains, amongst other bassi-relievi, one in which the devil is observed issuing from the head of a female lunatic, while prayers are being offered up by some priests and nuns, and close at hand another chained maniac appears anxiously waiting his turn to be relieved from the demon. The ceremony of crawling beneath the tomb of the saint existed so long that the pavement has been worn away by the hands and knees of the devotees. This act is still occasionally performed, and in this age of the revival of pilgrimages and adoration of shrines, it may come again into

general use. I should like to know the exact date of the sculpture over the tomb. I imagine it must have been the work of some artist, wiser than his fellows, who allegorically typified the good work carried out at this colony in such a manner as not to offend the all-powerful priesthood. For in the spirit it is correct: the shrine of Saint Dymphna, according to Protestant or rational ideas, can contain no especial virtues; but the system of treating lunatics which has sprung up around there—and all honour to the priests and nuns for originating the same—has literally freed the maniac from his chains, and has helped to cast out the demon of madness from the brain of many an unfortunate. The pauper and other patients gathered from all Belgium number about 1,000, and form one-tenth of the whole district. These are distributed in the town of Gheel and the surrounding hamlets, and are allowed almost entire liberty. They are divided between 500 different dwellings, 300 of which are cottages, or small farmhouses, in which the most violent are dispersed. The remaining 200 residences are in the town of Gheel, and are appropriated to quieter lunatics, and those who are able to pay more liberally for their treatment. More than three patients are never domiciled under one roof, generally not more than one. These are placed under the care of the host and hostess, and share in the usual life of the family; their occupations and employment, and cares and enjoyments, are the same. If it is not thought fit that a patient should labour with a plough or spade, he remains at home, takes care of the children, attends to the soup on the fire, or weeds the garden; if a female, she will busy herself in ordinary domestic work. A strict system of supervision prevails; the entire country being divided into four districts, each having a head

guardian and a physician, to whom is entrusted the medical care of every patient belonging to that section. The burgo-master of Gheel presides over a managing committee of eight persons, whose duties are to watch over the patients, and admit or discharge them. A visiting commissioner is annually appointed, whose time is spent in inspecting the various dwellings and seeing that the patients are properly cared for.

In Gheel, the mechanical restraint of the camisole is sometimes used, but it is said less often than in the large continental asylums confined by walls. I have given this slight sketch of a unique institution, as it is the only one in which the system has been thoroughly tested. Yarra Bend was established on this principle, one totally opposed to the—to me—retrograde course pursued in erecting the barracks at Kew, Ararat, and Beechworth.

Early on the morning of Monday, the 10th July, I commenced duty as an attendant at Yarra Bend, being appointed to the "Upper Division." The reserve here is 640 acres in extent, being almost surrounded by the picturesque curves of the river, whence it takes its name. The scattered buildings are officially divided into what are known as the upper and lower divisions. The latter includes the women's departments, and the male "refractory" wards. The former is a long enclosure, of some acres in extent, bounded by a brick wall, and ha-ha in front, and by high wooden and iron fences at the back. Dr. Paley, the inspector of asylums, is also superintendent of Yarra Bend, his powers as such, however, being chiefly delegated to the two medical officers, who take separate charge of the two divisions. Dr. Patrick Smith was my superior, and to him I was ordered to carry my letter of appointment. Ringing at the lodge gate, I was admitted by a good-natured Cerberus. On telling him I

had come to take duty, he said, "The doctor ain't in. Here, Joe, take 'im over to Mr. Coakley." "Joe," I found, was a dumb boy, all smiles and animation. He seized me, and proudly escorted me to the house on the other side of the gates, and hammered at the door, making signs intimating that he (Joe) knew all about it, and would put me through. Joe's summons soon brought Coakley, the head attendant of this division, to the door. He looked at my order and said, "You'll have to take the place of a man who's off in U ward for a time. Come along." Passing through the inner gates, which form a sort of court-yard round the lodges, we walked along the road towards U ward. At the first glance one could see an entirely different state of things to that at Kew. The well-metalled road winds along past grassy and shady lawns, the trees having been wisely left standing. Shrubs and flowers have since been planted; seats are placed under the trees, on which patients were sitting, and the whole aspect was soothing and home-like. Dr. Smith's house is like all the buildings in this division—entirely distinct, and fenced off from the road and paddock. Next to this is U ward, a one-storied brick building, to which Coakley led me, and consigned me to the chief ward attendant. This was a jolly good-tempered looking man of about fifty. He showed me my room and said, "You won't have much to do here—just look around and smoke, or what you like." In this ward there were only twenty-eight inmates, the majority old men, and all harmless cases. The duties, indeed, appeared to be light. There was not the slightest restraint; the doors of the building were all opened, and the old men sat on benches under the verandah, or were scattered about the grounds. This ward consists of a day-room, store-room, and two attendants' rooms in the centre, with a dormitory at each side, and

scullery and lavatory at one end. There is ample superficial and cubic space for the number of patients. The attendants' rooms, however, are not so good as those at Kew, and generally there did not appear to be so much attention paid to cleanliness.

The front of this ward looks on to the road running along between "the cottages" and a piece of ground now being made into a bowling-green. Further on there is a building, containing kitchen, attendants' mess-room, and billiard-room. Past that again, other cottages and buildings. The ha-ha is not apparently so deep as that at Kew, and, instead of resembling a stony cutting, it is a grassy slope. On the edge of the bank runs a wooden paling, which almost hides the low brick wall beyond; and, walking through this little settlement, one seldom realizes that it is surrounded by barriers which cut off communication with the outer world. The cottages, eight in number, are of brick, and stand in their own gardens, surrounded by wooden palings. Besides U Ward there are two other wards, two-storied buildings, of brick, also standing in their own grounds. The hospital, and two other small wards, are built of wood. One of these is the cottage for idiot boys. Respecting this Dr. Paley, I see in his last report, draws attention to the want of a separate establishment for idiot children, and cites, as examples, the institutions for that class in England. My attention has lately been drawn to the fact of there existing at Newcastle, New South Wales, an asylum for idiot children, which, under its present admirable management, is said to be equal to anything of the sort in the old world. Victoria should not be behind her sister colony in this respect. Through the centre of the division, by the side of the road, runs a deep drain, increasing the general resemblance to an open settlement. Trees are

all about ; paths lead from the road to the different buildings. Everything appears home-like, and a total contrast to Kew. At the back of U ward is the garden belonging to it ; here are vegetables and flowers, and a small greenhouse erected by the ward attendant, who is a good gardener. All the gardens appear to have been made voluntarily by the attendants and patients, each taking a pride in the success of their own. Running about the ward and garden I was surprised to see several cats, and in the back verandah there was a fine dog chained. Neither cat nor dog had I seen at Kew. Here this only increased the domestic aspect, and the patients certainly were none the worse from the association with dumb animals. Cats are to be seen all about the division, being privileged animals on account of their supposed vermin-destroying powers. They, however, get so well fed that they have lost their taste for sport, and it was related as a stern fact that, one day, an attendant came into the ward and saw a cat and a rat lying down in front of the fire, side by side. This, if true, is certainly a sign of the approaching Millennium. Dogs are supposed to be forbidden, but a little terrier or two being introduced to kill rats, led to other attendants with sporting proclivities, or affection for animals, indulging their tastes, greatly to the delight of many of the patients. I trust that the publication of this will not lead to the promulgation of an edict of banishment against my four-footed friends. In U ward, as in every other, caged canaries warble their melodious prison song, and cheer and soothe the disordered intellect.

U ward is situated over the brewery. A special brewer is employed, and they make capital ale here. Framed, in the malt-room, is the certificate for excellence awarded at the last Exhibition. The beer is made from pure malt, and is bottled.

If such could be procured outside, the public would acknowledge that good ale can be brewed in the colonies. The attendants are each allowed half-a-bottle, or a bottle, a day—at least, I know I had the former; and I often saw others walk off with a bottle for their private use. Here, as at Kew, the allowance of medical comforts is very liberal, as is shown by the fact that, out of 2,270 dozen of beer brewed last year, only 144 dozen were sent to Kew, the rest being consumed on the premises. The brewer was my room mate in U ward, at which I congratulated myself. His principal assistant was a boy without ears, and with a comical face, which might have been modelled like that of Gwynplaine, *L'Homme Qui Rit*. Orifices had been artificially formed in his head, and he could hear a little, and speak intelligently. In everything, John was as smart as any outsider, and gave valuable assistance to the brewer and in the ward. The duties in this ward consisted in rising in the morning at seven o'clock, superintending the making of the beds and scrubbing of the floors, performed, as at Kew, by patients who knew their duties as well as an attendant. Then John, and two other patients, would fetch the tea from the kitchen, the bread and butter being kept in a store in the ward. Other patients set the tables in the day-room, and all quietly taking their seats, the tea, bread and butter, and "sop" would be served out to them. There was no fighting, no confusion; the patients knew each other, and the attendants also knew each man's peculiarities, and how he should be served. After the attendants' mess was over, the patients who might be working out in the farm or garden would be taken to the scene of their employment. The others would sit outside, or under the trees in the garden. The doors of the ward were open all day long, and the patients could come in and out as they liked.

At one o'clock the workers would be back for their dinner; and the meat and vegetables, brought in covered tins from the kitchen, was served out by the attendants, and the meal would pass orderly and quietly. The same with tea, after which the patients would sit round the fire smoking and talking, John and another patient controlling them. One by one they would go off to their beds, and by eight o'clock the ward would be in silence, after an uneventful monotonous day, totally different to anything I experienced at Kew. Dr. Smith would perhaps be round during the day, and the head attendant (Coakley) might drop in once or twice; but there was no regular inspection, as at Kew.

On Tuesday I was sent to N ward, which is situated on the second story of one of the brick buildings, and faces Dr. Smith's house. The floor underneath is L ward, and these wards are supposed to be occupied by more noisy and troublesome cases, and those not to be trusted in the comparative freedom of the cottages and other wards. Still in N ward they appeared to me mostly quiet cases, although many were confined at night in separate cells which line one side of the corridor, the dormitories being at each end. The corridor, which is divided into two parts by an attendant's room, acts as the day-room, and here all meals are served. In this ward I met my friend Pompey, a magnificent Newfoundland dog, who at night roamed on the verandah, which is enclosed with strong wire. On the next day I was transferred to L ward, giving me a good chance of seeing the different treatments. Here there were a number of epileptics, who required watching, and one or two supposed troublesome cases. Outside, in the garden attached to this ward, is a wooden shed, where a number of the patients sleep, an attendant occupying an apart-

ment at the end. These old wooden erections, of which there are several in the division, have verandahs in front and wooden pegs on the walls outside the doors, on which the patients have to hang their clothes at night. In this damp weather this seems to me an admirable arrangement to give the wearers cold and rheumatism. In N and L wards the routine was as previously described. The fifty patients would rise in the morning, have their breakfast, some go to work, others to roam about the grounds, and those who could not be trusted thus far were sent into a small exercising yard at the back. The dinner-bell would bring them all in again. Except at night, the ward door would not be locked. Here I met my first friend, Joe the dumb, who was one of the most useful hands in the division, knowing when and how everything should be done. There were many, of course, comparatively sane, who could read the papers or play a game at euchre with skill. There, of course, was the man who had lost thousands in mines, reminding me of a friend of mine who carefully carries in his pocket a little nugget of gold, which represents a great amount, it being all that he got from his shares. A wonderful case there was of a man whose prominent delusion was that he was a Chilian subject. To the Chilian consul here, and to the Chief Secretary, he sends folios of reports, requesting them to be forwarded to the Minister of that Republic in London. The damages he intends to claim for detention are something heavy ; and, if not satisfied, he intimates that Chilian gunboats will sail up the bay and bombard Melbourne. On every other point I was told this man was sane, but this subject of nationality was "nor'-nor'-west" to him. His delusion arose from his having sailed either in a Chilian ship, or an English one floating under that flag. This was twenty years back, and now, sent here by his friends,

with the cunning of the madman, he claims to be a citizen of Chili, and worries the consul to obtain his release. The name appears to have struck his fancy, for he knows nothing of South America, nor has he the slightest idea of life there. I reasoned with him and tried to make him see that, as long as he persisted in this delusion, he would be detained. I expatiated to him on the glories of Great Britain and the Anglo-Saxon race, and pointed out to him that the fact of an Englishman wishing to forswear his allegiance, and take up the nationality of a South American Republic, except for the purposes of residence and trade, was sufficient proof of his madness. This theory was loudly applauded by an old sea captain, who had sailed into Peruvian and Chilian ports, and who immediately commenced comparing with mine his experiences of Spanish America. There were several Chinese in this ward, all comparing, as regards personal cleanliness, most favourably with the European patients. One of them was the best-looking Mongolian I have seen in Victoria, his features showing that he was of a decidedly superior caste to the majority of his countrymen here. His bright eyes twinkled with intelligence and animation, and it was hard to believe that he was insane. He was employed in the stores, and I have no doubt earned his board. Another Chinaman was pointed out to me as a very dangerous man. He was blind, evidently from an explosion, as his face was blue with grains of gunpowder, where it was not scorched. This man was very quarrelsome, and kept up a continual grumbling to himself; but, poor fellow, I saw nothing to make me think he was mad. His sight gone, confined, he must have thought, in a prison, surrounded by voices he could not understand, it was enough to make any man violent. I was especially cautioned not "to interfere with him"

(an asylum euphuism) ; and I did not, further than to give him tobacco, for which he was grateful. I don't thoroughly understand how colonial physicians can testify to the insanity of Celestials. Of course, in some cases of epilepsy and imbecility, nature has planted indelible signs ; but there were several cases I saw at Kew and Yarra Bend, in which no outward sign could be discovered, and the mental delusions could not be tested without a knowledge of the language.

I was twice on "yard duty" at Yarra Bend. The yard is a small enclosure at the back of the building, containing L and N wards. It is surrounded by a high wooden fence, shutting out all view of the surrounding country. Along one side of the wall there is a verandah, and there is a small shed and benches in the centre. A gravel walk goes round the yard, and attempts have been made to cultivate a grass plat and flower beds. Only one attendant is on duty here, and the occupation was very monotonous. Amongst the twenty to thirty patients exercising here, there were few who could converse coherently. The epileptics required watching, and the paralytics, who crawled with a seal-like motion around the yard, sometimes wanted assisting. Two or three men played cards ; the old sailor walked an imaginary quarter-deck ; an imbecile Chinaman kept up a continual howling, and another Celestial quietly sat in the sun taking things easily, devoting his energies to the colouring of clay pipes, seemingly content with his lot. A stout youth, whom the attendants plagued by calling "Pigtail Joe," constituted himself my lieutenant, and would bring me periodical reports as to what the different patients were doing. "I tell you what it is," he said, "I believe that man's mad—he's a-going on so. What do they send lunatics here for?" I told him it was strange, and that he must keep a good look-out on

them for me. My great friend, however, was Louis Guy. He was a Swede, an old man, garrulous, and given to tearing his clothes. Consequently, he was placed in a camisole, greatly to his discomfort. He had an insatiable appetite for tobacco, and would chew it all day long. I had to continually feed him with the weed, or I had no peace. He was an accomplished beggar. I might have just stuffed his mouth full, but should Coakley come into the yard, he would beg. "Mr. Coakley, sir, a little bit of tobacco?" and seldom in vain. He was not always in the camisole, for Coakley ordered it to be taken off one day, instructing me to specially watch him. "Now, Guy," said I, "promise me you won't tear your things." "I promise you faithfully, master. Give me a little bit of tobacco." He kept his word. "Why do you tear your things?" I asked. "If they'll give me good clothes I won't tear them, but these old things are no good," was his reply. I have read of a lunatic being cured of destructive tendencies by being arrayed in new apparel, and I should be glad if Dr. Smith would try the experiment with this man. It would be a stage in the encouragement of personal decency and self-respect which should always be inculcated as curative treatment. Guy kept his tongue wagging all day long, and amused me much with his quaint conceits and curiosity as to the doings of the outer world. The only man who gave me much trouble was one who developed vegetarian tastes *à la* Nebuchadnezzar. He would eat grass and twigs of shrubs, and was particularly partial to the broad leaves of the harum lilies. Seizing his opportunity, he would cram his mouth full of these, and conceal stalks and leaves up his sleeve for a future debauch. When I robbed him of his spoil, he would fight and howl furiously.

I devoted as much time as I could steal to the study of the

cottages. Each of these has accommodation for sixteen patients and one attendant. They are all built alike, with verandahs in front, bordered with pleasant creeping plants. The gardens in front of each are carefully laid out, and there is an occasional attempt at the formation of an arbour. The front door opens immediately into the day-room, which is furnished with table, forms, chairs, and ornamented with coloured prints. The bird-cages, also, make the place look homelike. At each end of the day-room are the dormitories, and also one or two single rooms. At the back there are the sculleries, &c. The whole system is essentially domestic. It is true the food is brought from the general kitchen ; but, members of one united family, the inmates have their meals in decency and friendliness, the attendant's post being mostly a sinecure. He is their friend and fellow-lodger, and his influence is chiefly moral. To see the respectable intelligent-looking men strolling in the cottage gardens, or sitting under the verandah, one would never think they were mad and the inmates of an asylum. To the occupants of the cottages the whole division is free,—they can roam about, visit acquaintances in other cottages or wards, go to the reading or billiard-room, or stroll on parole in the paddock, often, indeed, paying a visit to Melbourne. At night they can play cards and draughts, and often the sound of music breaks the stillness. All this is so different to the system at Kew that one cannot understand the two methods of treatment existing almost side by side. One must be wrong. At Yarra Bend they are not at present receiving patients, and the inmates have mostly been there some years. In the upper division, I think it almost certain that the majority might be safely boarded out, or be in some such institution as the Benevolent Asylum. It is certain that, as lunatics, they receive more attention and

greater comforts than Dr. Heath would allow them; but still the fact remains, that they are being maintained at a far greater expense, the cost of managing a lunatic asylum being naturally always much higher than of a purely charitable institution. Could Yarra Bend be relieved of a number of its inmates, the cottages, I think, might be with great benefit used for the reception of the convalescents from Kew. Many of the inmates are so satisfied with cottage life, that I think they would not leave except under compulsion. Amongst these I found at Kew many of respectable condition in life, who appear to have been sent out here by their friends, just to get rid of them, or with the vague idea that the air of Australia is particularly soothing to the brain. Again, I urge the suggestion that a small tax should be levied on each passenger landed at Melbourne, which would go towards the maintenance, in benevolent and lunatic asylums, of these exiles from Europe, whom Victoria is at present called upon to keep. Here is an instance of the kind:—In one of the cottages resides Dr. —. He was, according to his own accounts, formerly a surgeon in the Royal Navy, and has since travelled and practised his profession in many climes. Much Freemasonry hath apparently made him mad. He has, so he says, taken every degree under the sun, is Grand Copt and Pundit in the Brahminical circle (whatever that may be). He's as big a swell in Masonry as Cagliostro, Frederick the Great, or Mr. —, of Melbourne. The walls of his cottage are covered with wonderful devices, painted hieroglyphics foreshadowing every imaginable event under the sun from a Masonic standpoint. The groundwork of these pictures is always black, which is accounted for by the fact that they are painted on newspapers. The doctor begs all the old papers, cuts them to the required size, gums them together, paints them

black, and then lays the subject out in yellows and reds. It would take a page of *The Argus* to describe this wondrous picture gallery. In his small room the doctor has the walls covered with pictures in progress, and a number of manuscripts neatly written out, illustrated in colours, and bound in brown paper. There is also a long scroll which contains yards of signs and symbols, explaining everything—from the first word in Genesis to the last in Revelation. “All pure Masonry, sir,” says the Doctor. “Just pull the string, and read a little further.” Life, however, seemed to me too short to study such matter. As an astrologer, the Doctor shines, and is great in casting horoscopes. When visitors come to the cottage, he delivers lectures, explaining his pictures, and accepts any fee which may be given. This amount he expends in fresh material, or gives away to charities. The Doctor, at one stage of the world’s history, would have been burnt as a sorcerer; at another, he would have made a fortune as an astrologer; now, he is simply a harmless enthusiast, who misapplies a wonderful amount of industry and talent. Certainly, the Government of Victoria have no right to detain him as a madman; but where can they send him? The Doctor, too, with his simple wants supplied, and in full enjoyment of his hobby, is perfectly happy and contented. I think the Freemasons of Victoria should do something for Dr. ——. It is a disgrace that he should remain a burden on a public charity, under the pretence of insanity. And if any of the prominent members of the three P.G.L.’s will pay a visit to Yarra Bend, and hear Dr. ——’s lectures, I think they will see reasons why he should be provided for elsewhere—either here or in England. I am willing to give my mite in aid of such a course.

In nothing is the difference between Kew and Yarra Bend

more marked than in the condition of the attendants' mess-room. At Kew, as I have shown, everything is of the meanest kind; at Yarra Bend, the accommodation and service is good. The mess-room of the upper division is situated in a central position, and is amply large. The attendants are divided into two messes, and their meals, like the patients', are conducted quietly and orderly. The captain of the mess is a polite old gentleman, with silver-grey hair, who looks after every want, and exercises a benignant authority. The table-cloth is comparatively clean, and we are provided with glass tumblers and toasting forks. The two patients, however, who assist in the room, generally make an ample supply of toast at tea-time. It was here, of course, that I met most of the attendants. Men originally of the same class and stamp as those at Kew, the difference in the system had acted upon them. The home-like and domestic atmosphere of Yarra Bend had exercised a moral influence upon the attendants as well as the patients. They seemed to recognize that they were attendants and not gaolers, and in their demeanour and conversation in the mess-room they conducted themselves with propriety, and there seemed a more social and friendly feeling between them. Scattered about during the day time, two attendants rarely being together, they met in the mess-room as a friendly exchange for ideas of common interest. At night the billiard-room was generally full, the table being always engaged, and round a table in the corner a number would be playing "forty-fives" or euchre. The stakes were strange ones, being small pieces of tobacco, cut, I am afraid, from the Government store. These would be continually used until worn to pieces, when the reversion would probably go to an inmate. No one, however, seemed to want for tobacco at Yarra Bend. The attendants

here have a great deal of liberty, and much is left to their individual judgment. Aided by the patients, the whole seems to work smoothly. Dr. Paley, engaged in his official duties as inspector of asylums, cannot exercise that strict personal supervision carried out at Kew, although he daily receives visits and reports from the medical officers and attendants, and governs the institution as, in my opinion, only a medical man can, in spite of Mr. Witt's foolish idea that these should be managed by layman. Dr. Patrick Smith generally leaves well alone—a doctrine very prevalent throughout the institution—and but that the system here has become so thoroughly established amongst both attendants and patients, evil results might arise from lax supervision. As it is, the breaches of discipline which I saw were not likely to affect the patients' health or comfort. During the time I was at Yarra Bend, Dr. Campbell, one of the official board of visitors, inspected part of the institution. I may hint that these gentlemen are now all well known, and can be seen coming afar off to Kew and Yarra Bend, and the word is passed around to prepare for them.

On Wednesday evening there was a ball. This was held in the large hall built in the centre of the division containing the female cottages. With another attendant from L ward I started off in charge of about a dozen patients. From the wards and the cottages, others were trooping along, and the road was quite merry and cheerful. It is at least a quarter of a mile from the lodge-gate to the hall, and our charges had plenty of opportunity for bolting, if they had so wished. The hall is wooden, built like a church, for which it also does service ; and with a gallery at the end, where the band plays, concealed by curtains from prying eyes. The whole floor was cleared for dancing, the patients sitting in recesses at each side—sexes separate, of

course. Baldwin, the head attendant of the lower division, acted as M.C. very efficiently, and the performance commenced by about half of the 150 present standing up for one of those abominable "jigs." This, however, was conducted with a great deal more propriety than the same at Kew, and everyone behaved much better. The band is weaker in number, but better in quality than the one at Kew. Between the jigs there were valse, quadrilles, and polkas, and the attendants and a few invited friends enjoyed themselves. When, however, one tries the *valse à deux* and your partner *à trois temps*, the result is not satisfactory—at least, it does not appear graceful to the lookers-on. At nine o'clock the attendants handed round coffee and biscuits to the dancers. And this was good coffee, too, decently served up in cups, instead of pannikins, as at Kew. Then the dancing commenced again. I saw my good-looking Chinaman laughing at the performances, and I tried hard to get him up for a jig, but without success, which only increased my opinion of his sanity. Altogether, although it did not alter my opinion as to the value of this kind of amusement, I was pleased with the quiet and orderly way in which it was conducted. Shortly before ten, "God Save the Queen," was played; and, the women going out first, we started for home. Round about the lodge gate our men collected, returning as orderly as schoolboys out for a holiday. In the summer time, I am told, there is plenty of cricket on the small but good ground, opposite the upper division. Of general employment, there appears to be a sufficiency; as, besides the farm of fifty-five acres, where root crops for dairy stock, potatoes, &c., are grown, there are tailors', shoemakers', carpenters', and blacksmiths' shops, in which nearly a third of the patients are employed.

The women's quarters at Yarra Bend consist of three wards in the lower division, and ten cottages in the enclosure around the dancing hall. The wards built on the other side of the road from Dr. Paley's house are of bluestone. They are only one-story high, and are built round a yard. The inmates are supposed to be refractory or troublesome cases; but, in fact, are not actively so. The day-rooms are cheerful with prints and flowers, the dormitories spacious and cleanly. There are a number of single rooms and padded cells, the latter being lighted from the top, access to which is had by a ladder, so that an attendant can watch, without exciting, a violent patient. The laundry is at the back of these wards, and is to be found full of women merrily working. Opposite this is the kitchen; and on the other side the bluestone wards belonging to the males in this division. Scattered around Dr. Paley's house there are numerous buildings—the inspector's office, billiard-room, houses of medical officers, matron, head warder, &c. Beyond these is the large garden belonging to the women's cottages. This is enclosed by high palings, and is kept in excellent condition—equal to any of the public gardens around Melbourne. Grassy lawns, shrubs, flowers, and ingenious fountains make a pleasant picture. There is a little greenhouse, too, containing some rare plants. In this garden the female patients are allowed to exercise—of course, only the quiet harmless cases; but how different to the dreary yard at Kew! From this you pass into the enclosure surrounding the cottages. At the bottom of this are two wooden buildings, used as female hospital wards. The cottages, ten in number, vary as to the accommodation afforded. One of these is devoted to idiot children. There is no attempt to afford these any instruction. I have described the dreary

appearance of the female quarters at Kew ; here everything is different, both in the hospital wards and cottages. Carpets on the floor, blinds and curtains to the windows, white crochet-covers on chairs and couches, flowers in glasses on every table, —everywhere, there was an evidence of tasteful womanhood. Much of this may be ascribed to the matron's influence, but a good deal is to be credited to the home system on which these cottages are conducted. The hall in the centre of the cottages acts not only as a ball-room and a church, but also as a sewing and general day-room. This affords ample space, and is far more convenient than the room so used at Kew. In the female division, as in the male, I saw the good results of this system, which, if persisted in, might by this time have been a pattern to the world, but which was rejected to build the costly prison barracks at Kew. The example first set by the priests and nuns at Gheel, and which is being followed, as fast as the prejudices of ages will allow, in some asylums in the Old World, had in Yarra Bend and its offshoots a chance of bearing good fruit. I hope that at least the present system will be allowed to exist there.

Much that I have written about the treatment of the insane at Kew will likewise apply to Yarra Bend. The same as to the attendants, their salaries, and mode of appointment. Most of the men are old hands, and obtain the highest salaries ; but there are a few miserable £1 a-week men. If at Yarra Bend I saw no ill-treatment, an absence of clouting, and a general passive kindness towards patients, it was not, I believe, because the men originally are any better than their fellows at Kew—it arises solely from the fact that, at Yarra Bend, the lunatic is treated as suffering from a disease, and the attendant is his nurse ; whilst at Kew the lunatic is a prisoner, and the attendant

his gaoler. It may be said that I did not see the refractory wards at Yarra Bend. I don't expect that a troublesome patient would be treated too mildly there; still, I think the influence of the place would penetrate even to those wards. It was with no particular desire to examine into the conduct of attendants that I visited Yarra Bend, but to contrast the workings of the cottage and "close" systems; and from observation, from inquiries amongst the patients, and from the testimony of every attendant I questioned, I have come to the conclusion before stated, that the building of Kew Asylum was one of the greatest mistakes made in Victoria; and the only rational plan of treating insanity is by the one instituted at Gheel, the cottage and boarding-out system.

Dr. Paley, in his last report, does not object to the introduction of the boarding-out system, to the extent of placing harmless pauper imbeciles and convalescents with their friends, paying these a small weekly sum until the patients are cured and enabled to support themselves. But he says—"It does not appear prudent in a young country to place persons partially unsound in mind under the care of strangers." In Scotland, after Gheel, the boarding-out system is carried to the greatest extent, and the class of "cotters" and small farmers with whom the patients are there placed does not exist in Victoria. Still the asylum would, if Dr. Paley's suggestion is carried out, be relieved of a number of inmates; and if the benevolent asylums throughout the country fall under Government control, at least 25 per cent. of the present inmates of our lunatic asylums should be maintained in those institutions. When this is done the present buildings at Kew, Ararat, and Beechworth will, for many years, more than accommodate the insane population of Victoria; but I think it would be a

good thing to turn Kew into a barracks or refuge for our poor. There is ample room in Victoria to establish, on a large scale, the system carried out at Yarra Bend. For recent and troublesome cases, detached wards like those in the upper division, and with separate exercising yards, would suffice. The majority of patients being, as I have shown, quiet, harmless, and convalescent, should reside in cottages, under the charge of intelligent and kind attendants. Farming on a large scale, and industrial pursuits of all kinds, should be carried on, and all the inmates should be kept fully occupied. My views, as to the character of the future lunatic asylums of Victoria, are summed up by an abler pen, in an article on Scotch lunatic asylums, in the *North British Review*, for August, 1857. The writer says :—

“ We have objection to the erection of isolated, single masses of buildings, and should infinitely prefer a series of buildings, studded over the grounds, resembling, in general character and appearance, an English homestead, or some industrial community. Our anticipations may at present be regarded as somewhat Utopian ; but we look forward to the time when a pauper asylum will partake of the character of a farming or industrial colony—when we shall have a large proportion of its inmates living in cottages—when the establishment will consist chiefly of an hospital for the treatment of acute cases, and of a farm and series of workshops for the occupation of the convalescent and well-behaved industrious inmates.”

This idea, promulgated twenty years ago, has been supported by many enlightened physicians. Indeed, the English commissioners of lunacy, in their tenth annual report, gave it consideration, and said—“ We have the best reason for believing the patients derive a direct benefit, in many ways, from residing

in cheerful, airy apartments, detached from the main building." At the Somerset and Devon County Asylum the cottage system has been tried, and, according to the physician's report, "with beneficial results." Everywhere this system has been a success ; and, from his experiences of Yarra Bend and Kew, Dr. Paley, I think, would now vote against the erection of any more lunatic barracks. I hold that the Government should otherwise utilize these, and return to the cottage system, which, to my mind, was foolishly abandoned. Then, as population increased, and society became more settled, the boarding-out system might be tried, reducing the expense of maintaining a costly staff of officials in connexion with the asylums, and carrying out fully the advice of Dr. Arlidge, in his work, *On the State of Lunacy*—"The grand object to be kept in view, when providing for the accommodation of the insane, is to assimilate their condition and the circumstances surrounding them as closely as possible to those of ordinary life."

Saturday, the 15th July, was my last day in the asylum. For nights I had scarcely slept. I felt a horrible depression growing upon me, and the influence of my daily and nightly thoughts overpowered me. My lot, thrown thus amongst this maddening crowd at the asylums, was a strange one. Hourly I studied the subject of mind and matter. The great mystery was to me no clearer ; doubting and dreaming I passed the nights, and the mornings brought no solution. It is easy to write of these things now, but lying there studying insanity in the midst of the insane, impregnated by the atmosphere of the place, was *une autre chose*. I recollected that an ex-attendant at Kew was now a patient. I wondered if insanity, as well as gout, lay lurking in my blood. So I was glad when my last morning at the asylum arrived. I was on yard duty that day. It was regular

English weather, the moisture dripped from the trees with a dreary sound. It was home November weather, in which, according to French novelists, Sir Bull goes and hangs himself in Hyde-park. My friend Guy came to me—"Give me a bit of tobacco, master? Thank you. What's the matter? You don't look well." "Guy," said I, "I think I'm going mad." "Oh, don't talk like that. Keep up your spirits and be cheerful. You get away out of this, and get a nice young lady to sing and play to you, and you won't go mad." There was a great deal of sound common sense in this advice, only, unfortunately, I have not been able to follow it out, but I treasure it carefully.

And now my tale is ended. I have endeavoured, according to my lights, to make it a faithful picture of asylum life, from a point of view never previously given to the world. Comparatively a stranger in the land, I have had no interest in the many disputes respecting the management of asylums in Victoria; and of the relative merits of the different systems in vogue at Kew and Yarra Bend, I speak not from professional and dogmatic theory, but from unbiassed belief, formed from practical experience of the inner workings of each. When I have had to censure individuals or system, I have done so from honest conviction; and I have been in this, the most important subject I have been privileged to investigate for *The Argus*, especially careful to avoid any sensational writing or remarks, tending to give an exaggerated notion of any abuses, or lapse of discipline in the asylums. Those connected with these institutions will, I believe, recognize the moderation exhibited in refraining from indulgence in this respect. A few adjectives, or the slightly different wording of a sentence—and, when required, I think I am equal to this—and my experiences would have assumed a

far darker hue. If I had confined my investigation to a stay of a few days, I perchance should have written more strongly ; but the object of my commission was not only to give pleasant, readable sketches of asylum life ; but, if possible, to contribute something of novel value to the vexed question of the treatment of our insane. Anxious to fulfil this, and to do justice all round—to the patients, the medical officers, and the attendants—I submitted for a month to rules, regulations, and duties entirely opposed to my natural instincts and acquired tastes and habits, not, I trust, without result. Many, in days to come, may bless *The Argus* for thus allowing “A Vagabond” to write his unbiassed views of asylum life from a month spent as an attendant at Kew and Yarra Bend.

SIXPENNY RESTAURANTS.

I DO not know if the Government of Victoria intends voting any further sum for the encouragement of immigration, or if the Agent-General in England gives much time or attention to diffusing information amongst the working classes respecting the “boundless resources” of the chief of the Australian colonies. The finest opportunity which has ever presented itself to colonial emigration agents to secure the bone and muscle—which are principally wanted in a new country—was during the first two years of the agricultural labourers’ movement in England. Canada and New Zealand took advantage of this, and their agents were at every labourers’ meeting, distributing pamphlets and making speeches. These two colonies left no stone unturned to secure the labour they so

much wanted. Indeed, unkind people say that Mr. Edward Jenkins, M.P., was only appointed agent for Canada, in consideration of his connexion with the Labourers' Union as one of the trustees and first sponsors of the movement. It is a fact that, when in Canada, Joseph Arch, president of the union, was offered £500 a-year to act as emigration agent, which he refused, and that a few weeks afterwards Mr. Jenkins, who was also in Canada, was made "Agent-General;" his whole duties, however, appearing to have consisted in encouraging emigration to the Dominion. Many thousand of English labourers went to Canada and New Zealand, some hundreds even to the Brazils; but the Australasian colonies were little advertised. They had no agents throughout the country districts, and a grand opportunity was lost. Of course, I am premising that labour is wanted here; and since I have been in the colonies, I have heard nothing but demands for such. The press and the keepers of registry-offices unite in saying that labourers, pure and simple, are required. Many mechanics are, it is said, also needed in different branches of trade. Now, if these facts are true, it behoves the Government to do something towards supplying the demand—unless labour is to be protected, or unless white immigrants, like Chinese, are threatened with murder and spoliation.

In this tide in the affairs of Victoria I offer my services. Yes, I will give (for a consideration) my valuable aid in saving the State. For a moderate salary, payable quarterly in advance, I will engage, acting under the Agent-General in England, to supply Victoria with as many thousand labourers and mechanics as may be required. But, alas! I stand little chance of obtaining another Government office. I have no influence. I am not Irish. My few acquaintances in Melbourne are

either helpless poor vagabonds or hopelessly respectable ; I don't even know an M.L.A. So, as there is no copyright of thought or ideas, I now present to the public this, my proposed plan of action. I would have printed one million handbills, exactly similar to those which any day, from twelve to two p.m., you will have thrust into your hands in the principal streets of Melbourne, and the wonders of which will strike an English labourer or mechanic dumb. Imagine poor Hodge, who lives on bread and bacon, and whose only idea of spending sixpence is to purchase a quart of ale, reading from the bill of fare that a breakfast with a choice of ten hot dishes of meat, bread and butter *ad libitum*, and "two or three cups of tea or coffee ;" a dinner with choice of six soups, twelve kinds of meat, including such epicurean luxuries as "beefsteak pudding" or "stuffed ox-heart ;" and six puddings or pies, with tea, coffee, and bread and butter, as at breakfast, may be had in Melbourne for 6d. a meal. The supper (which he reads may be had "both before and after closing of the theatres," pleasantly suggesting that it is the custom for his class to patronize those places of amusement) is even more bewildering—"stewed rabbit," "haricot mutton," "curries," and some fifteen other dishes, with salad, beetroot, and tomatoes. A land which can furnish such delights for 6d. must, surely, be the working man's paradise. Such handbills I would have distributed all over Great Britain ; they should be given to Hodge as he munched his crust under the hedgerow ; to the mechanic, as he issued from the factory gate, with his handkerchief containing bread and butter and a scrap of cold meat to be eaten at the bar of some dirty public-house, washed down by half a pint of beer. With these handbills should be given another, showing

that labourers and mechanics obtain one-third more or double the wages they get in England. The ground-bait thus laid, and the British workman appealed to through the medium of his finest feeling—his appetite—from town to town the voice of the “Vagabond,” or his agents, should be heard crying out the advantages of Victoria, but chiefly expatiating on the theme, “All these good, honest, square meals for 6d. ; we who speak know, as we have eaten, fattened upon, and relished them.” This is the plan which I beg to submit to the Government, and I really think many people of old have had statues erected to their memory who did not devise any idea half so productive of public good. I may “be heard of ” at *The Argus* office.

Most men have to suffer a perpetual combat between their tastes and their exchequer. This is daily brought home to them in the satisfaction of their appetites. Where one has a soul for turtle and ortolans, it is hard to descend to sausages. To feel that a palate educated to appreciate *caviare* should be condemned to boiled ling in a sixpenny restaurant—what an indignity ! There you feed like the beasts of the field : it is a mere question of supporting nature. In another sphere one dines, which is a fine art not thoroughly understood by the common herd, and the grossness of feeding is relieved by the poetry of companionship and association. A popular writer begins the praise of a dinner thusly—“With what discursive freedom does the imagination range from the little plate of oysters that preludes your soup to pearl fishery and the coral reefs, with moonlight sleeping on the breaking surf. And the soup, be it turtle or mulligatawny, how associated it is with the West Indies or the East, bearing in its aromatic vapour thousands of speculations about sugar, slavery, pepper pots, Panama hats, piccanninies, and the Bishop of Barbadoes, or

the still grander themes of elephants, emeralds, and the Indus, with rajahs, tigers, punkahs, and the Punjaub." Following out this train of thought through the courses, one would wind up with the dessert in the vineyards and almond groves of Spain or Italy. And the wines! There is real poetry in their associations. The Bordeaux or Burgundy bring back the Franco-Prussian war and the previous glories of the empire. The Johannisberg pictures the vine-clad cliffs of the Rhine, and the firm ranks of the sons of Vaterland singing, "Der Wacht." The sherry takes us to Spain with reveries about Carlists, Alphonsoists, and Republicans; speculations as to the paternity of the present king, and the next work of Castelar; and with the port there comes a panorama of Torres-Vedras and the Douro, and we drink to the memory of "The Duke." Even if alone these prandial delights soothe the mind and banish melancholy, you forgive your enemies, and rise from the table at peace with all mankind. To those who have acquired the really fine art of dining, to whom "the best of life is but a dinner party," it is a hardship to be compelled to merely feed. Well-bred Englishmen, perhaps, were better calculated to endure prandial reverses than the men of other nations. The hardy lives they led at school, the training for sports, and the rough life led by them on Scotch moors, and by Norwegian salmon streams, would prepare them to look on the eternal damper and mutton of the bush, or the *cuisine* of the sixpenny restaurant, without disgust. I say "were," because the average young Englishman of to-day, is not, I believe, equal to the men of yore in his capacities for enduring hardships. It is true athletic sports have spread all over Great Britain, and amongst every class—it is true that the *jeunesse dorée* are still mighty in the saddle and with the breech-loader; but

every description of sport and exercise in England is now carried on with the most luxurious accompaniments, and the young men of to-day shudder when they hear of the rough fare and hard lives of those giants of sport, "Squire" Forrester, Budd, Osbaldistone, Mytton, or Ross. I do not say that we are any worse morally, or have degenerated physically, but certainly we do not now go through any training calculated to teach us that there is any worse thing in life than a badly cooked dinner. This is an age of luxurious comfort succeeding to one of alternate splendour and hardship. The real of to-day is more voluptuous than the most gorgeous ideals of yesterday. Beckford had a glorious imagination, but he could not evolve an elevator for poor Vathek, whom he pictured painfully toiling up and down the 1,500 steps of his tower several times a day.

Happily, I have been accustomed to rough it in many parts of the world. I glory in a good dinner, but can eat bread and cheese with an appetite; and so one morning I felt no very great repugnance at the fact of having to make a meagre breakfast, which was forced upon me by the unsatisfactory state of my finances. The day before, I had migrated from a certain hotel where I paid ten shillings a day (very cheap, too, according to London scale) to a small apartment in the suburbs, for which I paid five shillings a week. (In London it would be double.) I had sallied down town with the intention of making a cheap breakfast, and had a shilling in my pocket devoted to that purpose. Although I had been some months in Melbourne, and was aware that the necessaries of life were very cheap here, I really had no thought that a breakfast could be got for sixpence. The idea seemed ridiculous, as sixpence appeared to me, up to that time, to be the lowest coin in circulation. I avoided the main thoroughfares, and at last entered a

small restaurant in one of the bye streets. "Breakfast, sir," said the Irish waitress, "chops, steaks, sausages, fried fish, dry hash"—. "Stop," I cried, aghast at this list of luxuries, "I will have a cup of tea and some bread and butter." "What else, sir? there's nice steak this morning." "How much is a steak?" I asked, bent on economy. "Sixpence, sir." "And the tea, and bread and butter?" "All sixpence." "Bring me a steak, then," I said; concluding that I had fully mortgaged my shilling. I was then supplied with a small steak, a roll, and cup of tea, which breakfast I humbly ate with a good appetite. When I had finished I rose, and putting my hand in my pocket, "How much?" I asked, grandly, and preparing to fling down my shilling as if I had hundreds at the back of it. "Sixpence for breakfast, thank you, sir;" and I left amazed at the fact of having discovered the cheapest meal in the world. The dinner was even a greater surprise to me. That I could obtain soup, meat, and pastry (no matter of what quality) for the ridiculously small sum of sixpence was a revelation of inestimable value. After the first day I gathered courage, and have since made a tour through most of the cheap restaurants. In essentials they are all much alike. The dishes appear to be stereotyped, and the cooking is much the same in all. There are generally, and especially in the summer, more flies in the dishes than refined prejudices might fancy. The sausages in all are bags of mystery, and the enormous consumption of these is a convincing proof that faith is strong in the colonies. The stews, which are mostly served at supper time, are not equal to the *pot au feu* of the French peasant, although the ingredients are as miscellaneous. Stewed lamb is a dish often on the supper bill of fare. I wondered for

a long time how this was, as lamb is seldom to be had for dinner, till at last I discovered that the multiplicity of dishes consisted chiefly in the names. "Stewed lamb," with a little curry stirred on the plate, became "curried mutton;" or, with the addition of a few slices of carrot, was "haricot mutton;" or, again, with a few boiled potatoes mashed in, was "Irish stew." Thus, a smart cook will supply a dozen dishes from one base. Rabbit pie and fish are considered extra luxuries, and are generally announced by placards in the windows. What strikes an Englishman as very strange is the fact of eggs being so dear here. These, boiled or poached, are charged 9d. Fowl or chicken is absent from the *menu* of the ordinary sixpenny restaurant; but at some they are to be had for one shilling. It seems to me that one of the best speculations untouched would be a large poultry farm in the neighbourhood of Melbourne.

Sixpenny restaurants vary a good deal in style. There are some in the principal thoroughfares which shine with plate-glass, white linen, and pretty waiter girls. But all this extra display, and the cost of the handbills, which are so freely circulated, causes perceptible diminution in the quantity or quality of the viands. The places where one really feeds best are the smaller restaurants, kept by married couples, who do the cooking themselves. At many of these places the proprietors often work very hard, and are not by any means making rapid fortunes. These are chiefly patronized by working men, who take their dinners there. At one o'clock you will see a tremendous rush, every seat at the little tables being occupied. If one has catholic ideas on the subject of dirty hands, it is amusing to sit down with the crowd and watch the different modes of eating. The waiters are for some twenty minutes under a pressure of orders enough to tire out the intellect of most men.

The *habitués* seem to strive to get done first, and he who sits nearest the door may order his "corned beef and cabbage" a dozen times, on each occasion it being captured *en route* as "my order." The great appetites of apprentice boys are something fearful to behold, the soup, steak-pudding, and piles of cabbage and potatoes being assimilated by the consumption of half a loaf of bread. After watching the performance of half a dozen of these embryo "sons of toil," you feel certain that the proprietor of the restaurant must be bankrupt on the morrow. A few quiet individuals generally dine after the one o'clock rush is over, and the same number may be seen at supper at seven o'clock, when they will have a chat together. At the restaurant I frequented there was a strange mixture. A negro gentleman from Jamaica, a noted politician in the Yankee sense of the word, who should have emigrated to the Southern States and got into office, instead of wasting his time here, where he is not believed in. A Frenchman, from the Mauritius. Several sons of the sod of various degrees of station and intellect, but mostly banded together under Holy Church in hatred of the Sassenach. A Birmingham mechanic, the best dressed man of the lot, bright, shrewd, and a liberal and freetrader of the John Bright pattern. A stray Chinaman, who is the only epicure, as he grumbles always at the quality of his "loast beef" or "cheak and lonions." A hawker, Hibernian, who orates on every subject. A young man of considerable self-assurance, who was an officer in the Southern army during the American war, and is fond of "blowing thereon." A blind beggar, often drunk, who sits near the door. A strange mixture this, truly, but really more interesting than the guests at many a first-class *table d'hôte*. The blind beggar is a character, not over cleanly certainly, but the presence of this Lazarus at the gate does not

affect our appetites. The room is a long one, and he is afar off. Barring his real or simulated blindness, he reminds me of the beggar in *Tom Burke of Ours*. He seems the sort of man to sing a seditious song and humbug a jury. On one occasion he distinguished himself greatly amongst his compatriots by offering to raise a subscription to buy Signor Ricciotti Garibaldi a rope to send to his father. Some one asked the reason of the Irish enmity to the Liberator of Italy. "Shure, because he was an enemy to his God," said a man of education, who ought to have known better. "Do you think yourselves better Catholics than the thousands who, born and bred under the shadow of the chair of St. Peter, still hail General Garibaldi as the noblest of heroes?" he was asked. "They were not good Catholics," was the argument; and it was of little avail to point out that the Fenians, whom every Irishman in his heart venerates, were also under the ban of Holy Church. The blind beggar knew his countrymen, and I have no doubt his little witticism has helped to swell his receipts at the gate of St. Francis's. Now and then a poor vagrant creeps quietly in, and, taking the lowest seat, enjoys a good meal. All through the day miserable-looking dogs, who, according to the Pythagorean doctrine, are transformed vagrants, steal in, and, gliding underneath the tables, pick up scraps and bones. The kind-hearted proprietor often feeds them, and if the dogs fare as well at every restaurant in Melbourne, it is no wonder we see so many ownerless curs.

Restaurant waiters are not a class. They are refugees from all classes. One or two establishments employ young girls, who certainly are efficient in enticing you to order beer, when a bar-room is an adjunct of the place; but men waiters are the rule. They are of all trades and professions—new chums and

old hands. Now and then you meet with a smart youth, who knows his business. Generally he has graduated at some good hotel, and drink or misfortune has condemned him to this. The cooks at these places, too, are mostly men who have begun with making damper. I know one man, however, thoroughly educated, who has passed years of his life in Parisian society, and is heir to £15,000 a-year, who is now a cook in a restaurant. Some taverns set up as rivals to the restaurants, by giving "hot lunches, with pint of ale, from twelve to two daily, for sixpence." The lunch is chiefly a plate of corned beef and potatoes, and instead of a pint of small beer you can compromise for a glass of the best. You get, altogether, about half the amount of food you would at a sixpenny dinner. Still these lunches are very cheap, and are much affected by young clerks, who may be hard up or economical, and who often steal in the back way to these places. Others, too proud, will spend sixpence in beer at an hotel bar, nibbling as much of the "free lunch" (they should see such at San Francisco !) as their shame will allow them. It would be far better for them if they would put their dignity on one side, and take a dinner in a sixpenny restaurant, which, up to this time, I consider to be the most wonderful example of Victorian progress and prosperity which I have met with.

THE THEATRE VESTIBULES.

IN the centre of this city of Melbourne exists a disgraceful, flagrant, heinous scandal, flaunting boldly and shamelessly in the face of decent society !—an outrageous insult to our wives and daughters !—an infamy hardly equalled in any civilized city in the world !—a reproach which should cover with ignominy those who instituted, and now profit by its continuance ! “What is the matter with this vagabond, and why these adjectives ?” you ask, in surprise. Who will dare to say that this denunciation is unmerited ? I write of an immorality open as the day and known to all, of the places where vice meets, and chaffers, and makes its bargains under the very eyes of “respectability,” of the chief marts of Melbourne prostitution—the Theatre Vestibules.

Let us first give a glance at the Theatre Royal. A stranger, used to the arrangement in London theatres, will naturally, if he wishes to obtain a good seat, ask his way to the stalls. At the gate of entrance there is a drinking bar ; within a stone's throw there are scores of others. But, to his surprise, inside the shabby, dirty Vestibule, he sees two other bars, running right and left, almost the full length of the hall. There is also an entrance to the bar fronting the street. The doors of these are all wide open, and attractive-looking barmaids are in attendance to minister to thirsty souls. The sights and sounds they see and hear must conduce to a liberal view of the moral code, and I am not surprised to have had pointed out to me two frail sisters who were formerly barmaids in the Vestibules. Between the bar on the right and the entrance to the stalls,

the stranger will perceive two mysterious closed doors. Surprised, no doubt, at the extremely liberal preparations for the supply of liquors, he will pass on to his seat, leaving further investigations till the *entr'actes*. Inside the Theatre, he finds the "stalls" are uncomfortable forms, crowded too closely. It is strange that Australian managers have not yet recognized the fact, now thoroughly appreciated in Europe and America, that this part of the house is the best. Before the curtain rises, the occupants of the stalls will be seen to be chiefly respectable people of the middle class—fathers with their families, and lovers with their sweethearts, including many who, according to the fashion of this time, may be called ladies and gentlemen. But, after the performance has commenced, considerable interruption will be experienced by the noisy entry of a number of women. There is no mistaking what class they belong to—no need that they should wear saffron, as of old. Their startling dresses and painted faces, without reference to their manner, stamp them as lorettes. They "make up" the part well. There is a notable difference in this class of women in France. There you may take your wife or daughter to any public place, and may sit next to the most notorious member of the demi-monde without perceiving, by her dress or manner, that she is different from the rest of the world. The fact is, that, in France, where these women are under police supervision, they, when they mix with the general world, take care not to be guilty, by their dress or manners, of any "offence against public decency," a charge which is very elastic, and is severely punished. How different in Melbourne! Flaunting in their dress, bold and vulgar in their manners, they flounce in and out of the stalls during the performance, causing in this alone a positive nuisance and annoyance. And whilst sitting down,

their conduct is little better. They laugh and talk amongst themselves, or with some of their male friends, Melbourne "cads," who ("dressed to kill," with slouched hats, *à la* larrikin, and paget coats) crowd and crush decent people in a manner which would not be tolerated in England or America. The conduct of these women in the stalls is really so bad, that audible cries of "shame" are sometimes raised by other occupants. They care little about any play, but come here to be seen, and to scrutinize the occupants of the dress circle, looking out everywhere for "friends," whom they will afterwards meet in "the paddock." From twenty to thirty of these women will often be present, and, in the course of the year, their contributions to the treasury will amount to a good sum; but that, for the sake of this, the lessees should tolerate (if not encourage) the presence of these women, is a disgrace to them and an insult to society, which should be resented by the decent portion of the public. It is not alone that the occupants of the stalls are annoyed, although to them it is a serious evil; and there is no more reason why they should be afflicted with the presence of these women than the visitors to the dress-circle. There is often little social difference between the occupants of the stalls and the circle. To a married man, wishing to treat his family to the play, the difference in the price will, if he pays many visits in the year, mount up considerably. He would, perchance, go often to the stalls, but there his wife and daughters are outraged by the presence of lorettes; and, if he goes to the dress-circle, the increased cost will lessen the number of his visits. But admitted, as they are, to the most prominent parts of the house, the vagaries of these women are seen by all. If they must be admitted, let them have a gallery to themselves, where they may show less publicly. "The manage-

ment will never turn away three shillings," I am told ; but if I could have my will, they should lose a good many three shillings as long as they admitted these soiled doves to annoy the audience. I remember that, twenty years ago, in Liverpool, the condition of the Amphitheatre (then leased by Mr. Copeland, and the only decent Theatre open in the town), was in this respect alike shameful. The members of the demi-monde were admitted to the side-boxes, and their presence there and in the passages was considered so scandalous that hardly any lady would attend the Theatre until they were banished. If the ladies of Melbourne would decline to patronize the Royal until this scandal is done away with, I think the lessees would soon find it to their interest to follow the example of the Opera-house management, and close their doors in the face of the demi-monde.

I have done with the inside of the house. Every frequenter of the Royal knows that I have mildly drawn the scenes witnessed there. Astonished at these, the stranger, strolling out during an *entr'acte*, would be still more surprised at Melbourne manners and customs, as witnessed in the Vestibule. This is generally crowded with men and larrikins, smoking and chaffing the loose women who pass in and out. The drinking bars are thronged, but only by men. The stranger sees that the women, possibly picking up a male companion, all enter the apartment which was previously closed, and which is now guarded by swing doors. Curiosity will doubtless prompt him to enter, and he will find himself in the far-famed "saddling paddock" of the Royal. It is a small bar, presided over by a man : the proceedings here are too unpleasant for a barmaid to witness. Here the most notorious women of Melbourne nightly throng, and run in the com-

panions they have caught in the stalls or in the Vestibules. Here is Lais, in her drunken old age, the wealthy proprietor of a notorious house. Here is Phryne, of lowly origin, born in a right-of-way, and educated in an Industrial School, now loudly dressed in scarlet satin, and sparkling with gold and jewels. Here is *not* Aspasia, of wit and knowledge, redeeming her lack of morality by the wonderful use of her talents; for if one thing in these women is more conspicuous than another, it is their lack of grammar and utter vulgarity of speech and soul. Bah! it is an insult to the memories of those glorious women of Greece to mention their names in connexion with such as these.

After the Theatre is over, it is high change in the "paddocks." The men are of all classes — "gentlemen," betting men, sharpers, clerks, junior officers of merchant vessels, and new chums. The women are very anxious to be treated, and also bring a number of "lady friends" to join in a drink. The new chum, whose naturally weak brains have not been improved by two or three months at sea, falls into the toils, and spends his money foolishly. One or two come here now whose finery and jewellery have vanished, bit by bit, who have little money left "to treat," but who still cannot, apparently, keep away from the scenes of vice and folly. Poor devils! I have my eye on two, who, I am afraid, will become brother vagabonds before long. One cannot literally describe the doings and the language here. Everything is low, coarse, and vulgar—*emphatically* "bad form;" and I cannot imagine how any one, with any pretension to the title of "gentleman," can frequent such a place. Melbourne vice is of a very poor kind. In London, at Cremorne or the Argyle, and in Paris, at Mabilly, there is a certain amount of enjoyment to be obtained without actual vice; but in Melbourne, *roués*

merely delight in visiting the "paddocks," and having drinks and vulgar talk with these wretched women. In this respect your young colonials are very "bad form," which is not improved by a tendency to Mohawkism amongst some of the wealthiest of them. We have, as yet, only seen the doings of the demi-monde in the stalls, vestibules, and "paddock" of the Theatre Royal. There vice is most prominent, as lately these women have been refused admission to the stalls at the Opera-house. But the stranger crossing to that establishment will see little difference in the Vestibule. There are bars here likewise, and a private room partitioned off from these. Inside this the scenes are worse, if anything, than at the Royal. Many of the women pass the evening between the two Vestibules, but most of the frequenters at the Opera are of a very low class. The difference is only one of degree, when all are coarse and vulgar. Still there is a difference. In both the Vestibules there are experienced police officers on duty; but, as they are on private property, I presume their presence must be paid for by the lessees. They do their duty, keep out young thieves, and prevent any great disorder; but they cannot interfere with the women in the Vestibules or in the "paddocks." These ladies know that they have, according to the ideas of the proprietors, a right to be there. The management of the Opera-house has done well to keep these women out of the stalls. Why do not the proprietors, or lessee, insist upon the closing of the "paddock"? If we must meet these women in the street, there is no reason that they should elbow our wives and daughters in the entrance to a Theatre, or make assignations under their very eyes. We read in the papers that "the police are making great efforts to grapple with the moral and social evils of Melbourne." Why do they not summon the lessees of both the Theatres, and the proprietors

of the bars, for keeping disorderly houses? To all intents and purposes, they commit this offence, as they "are frequented," &c., according to the Act.

Many will say that I am making a great deal to do about nothing—that there is no criminality or gross offence likely to arise from the presence of these women in the Vestibules. They will refer to what I have said on this subject in "The Outcasts of Melbourne." They will show that, if these women are debarred from the Theatres, they will congregate elsewhere, and that "isolation makes little hells." They will maintain, perhaps, that the mixing with respectable society keeps them, to a great extent, in order, and that it is better, as I have before written, that they should have healthy amusements. There is reason in all this. Healthy amusements for the people are sadly wanted here. It is strange that the London correspondent of *The Argus* should, in a recent letter, have pointed out the same need at home. I have no objection to the presence of the thief or outcast in the gallery, or even to Magdalen in the stalls, if, like her French sister, she will, for the nonce, behave herself. But the lorette of Melbourne frequents the Theatres and Vestibules—not for amusement, but to ply her trade; and even granting that it is hard to shut the door in her face, the existence of the "saddling paddocks" is a scandal established with a forethought for the courtesan's benefit which is an eternal disgrace to their promoters. There are people who believe that good always comes out of evil, and who may think that the scenes in the Vestibules act as a warning to modest young women, and will deter them from entering on a career of vice; but the great philosopher, John Stuart Mill, from whose teachings I have endeavoured to learn and profit, says:—"The tendency of good is towards good, and of evil to further

evil. One bad action leads to others, both in the agent himself, in the bystanders, and in the sufferers. All bad qualities are strengthened by habit, and all vices and follies tend to spread." These are great truths, and the familiarizing of these scenes cannot but have an evil effect upon the morals of society. Virtue sees Sin in the stalls, clothed in rich garments and sparkling with jewels; whilst she, in the pit, wears homespun. She sees that Sin enjoys herself in the Vestibules and in the "paddocks," and altogether appears to have a good time of it. It seems as if Vice had floated over the barriers which kept it apart, and is elbowing Virtue out of the field. It may be argued that, according to this doctrine, society is being injured through the representation of the amours of the Duchess of Gerolstein, Mdle. Lange, and other stage heroines. But, after all, a stage play has little immediate influence on the morals of a generation. It indicates what they are, but does not originate them. Half-a-dozen abandoned women plying their trade in the company, or presence, of the virtuous of their sex, do more harm than the representation on the stage of a hundred immoralities; and this, besides the annoyance and insult to decent society, is the evil which I denounce.

Previous attention has doubtless been drawn to these shameful scenes; still, this may not be without effect in arousing public opinion to deal with this crying scandal. If so, I shall feel that I have not in vain mortified the spirit by listening to dreary plays, nor needlessly injured my health and corrupted my morals by the deleterious drinks I consumed, and the conversations I listened to, in the "paddocks" and Vestibules.

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BERGER



